SERMONS OF *M. Iohn Caluin*, vpon the x. Commandements of the Lawe, giuen of God by *Moses*, otherwise called the Decalogue.

Gathered worde for worde, presently *at his Sermons, when hee preached on Deuteronomie*, without adding vnto, or diminishing from them any thing afterward.

Translated out of French into *English*, by I. H. almar

¶ *Imprinted at London* for Iohn Harison. 1581.

T D

S.r William Baird of Newbraith Bar.t

To the Right excellent and Honorable Lord, the Lord Robert Dudley, Earle of Leicester, Baron of Denbigh, Knight of the most noble order of the Garter, Maister of the *Queenes Maiesties horses, and one of her Graces* most Honorable priuie Councell, Iohn Harmar wisheth all godly felicitie, continuance of health, increase of Honor, and graces eternall.

Ccasioned, Right Honorable, to consider certaine of M. Caluins Sermons in the Frenche tongue, vpon the law of God and his hestes, and finding them (though gathered and set foorth by others, yet) answerable to their makers labour, to bee godly, learned, and profitable, I was the bolder to aduenture the deliuerance of them into our mother language, and most bolde to present your Honour therewith: the beginning of small abilitie, such as they bee, yet due to your Lordship, vnto whom I owe all thankefulness and humble duetie. Your Honours good procurement of her Maiesties gracious fauour, whereby I first became a Scholer in Winchester Colledge, afterward to bee remoued to the Newe Colledge of Oxford, whereof at this present I am a poore member, I coulde neuer since forget, or bury so good a benefite in such great oblivion. Some sig-

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nification therefore of a gratefull minde is herein sought, together with the profite of many the simpler sort, which the rather may bee attained to, by your Lordships honourable name, fauourable countenance, and protection, which being vouchsafed, wil bee sufficiently able to counteruaile the contrary endeuours of such euill disposed persons as seeke euen vnder the colour of greatest truth, to pull out the eyes of knowledge, and to bring a palpable darkenesse vppon the face of the earth, a darkenesse to be brought in by the grosse myst of deuout ignorance as more perillous, so more lamentable than the temporarie darkenesse of Aegypt. For that is the pretence which they vse, when as they seeke no other thing than to entrap men by diuelish Sophistrie. What need the lawe (say they?) We haue the Gospel. What need we written expositers? We haue the liuelie voices of Preachers sounding in great plentie euerie where. Of which two speaches, the former is vaine, the later partiall, and both of them are wicked. Truth it is, that the strength and sting of the lawes dominion to condemnation, concerning the faithfull, is weakened and cleane plucked out: that the fire is extinguished whereewith the mountaine smoked, that the stonie tables are softned, that the heauie yoke is lightened, that grace hath superabounded, and an horne of strong saluation is erected and declared through the administration of the spirite. What then? Shall we therefore welter in sinne, and wallow in the lustes thereof, because of these thinges? God forbid. Nay rather, as the law

schooleth vs, to seeke for grace at the bodie of Christe, so the gracious Christian is taught to repaire againe to the booke of the lawe, to liue thereafter: in deede nowe, without seruile feare, being deliuered from bondage, to serue in freedome of an vpright, holie, and sincere conscience. But as the Bee that hath in her honie, hath also a sting: so the best men indued with the grace of GOD, a thing incomparable better than honie, haue notwithstanding certaine remnants of the staine of Adam, as a sting of corruption to their mortall bodies. Whereof to put vs in mind, that we may plucke out this sting, and as it were weed the garden of our consciences (who as the purest ground, yet bring foorth some weedes of imperfection:) the law of God is most behouefull & necessarie, and M. Caluins trauelles thereon, most fruitefull and profitable, who striketh euer at the originall and roote of sinne, and bringeth the commandement to his olde, first, and true meaning, from the corrupt and common vnderstanding. For hee groundeth the exposition of the law, vpon the nature of the Lawegiuer, who, because he is a spirit, will be serued in spirite and trueth. And because he searcheth the reines, & soundeth the depth of the heart; will be serued with euery affection and motion thereof, in all holinesse and sinceritie: so that no man can safely feede or flatter himselfe in the smallest of his owne faultes or follies. And now, what need there is of this knowledge in England, all men see, and others can better say, than my selfe declare; how thinlie, scant heere and there, such ex-

cellent vnderstanding groweth. Which thing in more words to lament, were an ouerlong detey-ning of your Lordship from your greater affaires. The Lorde of Lordes, and God Almightie garde your euer, and guide you with his holie spirite, to the benefite and commoditie of our coun-trie, and to the profite of his Churche, with increase of honour, to his honor alwaies.

Your humble to command

Iohn Harmar.

which haue the charge of teaching in his church. Let vs then vnderstand, that God will not that we receiue his truth for one day only, as if one lesson were enough for vs: but that we shoulde repeate againe that which before we vnderstood, to the ende it might tarrie by vs, and take such deepe rote in vs, that we might haue no excuse, nor make any allegation, to say: O, I haue not yet beene throughly instructed. God then on his part is alwaies ready to teach vs, to the end we might not erre, except we our selues would wittingly decline, and of wilfull malice. And here is expresse mention made of the temple of Peor, to shewe, that although the people had in that place an obiect of sight to turne them to superstition, yet they had also a remedie, in that God daily stirred them vp by his woorde, to the end they shoulde not meddle with the idolatries of the Paynims.

True it is, that it was an hard and grieuous chastisement, that the people of God were feigne to haue euer before their eyes the temple of an idol: it was all one, as if God, to spite and anger them, should say: I did call you to possesse a lande, which should be dedicated to my seruice, where you shoulde haue seene nothing which might in any point haue offended you: for my sanctuary shoulde haue beene set vp in the middest of you. I woulde haue beene purely worshipped according to my law, the lande shoulde not haue byn vnhallowed & defiled with her olde superstitions, al idolatry should haue been so rased out, that a man should heare nothing but my praises sounded: but now ye see ye are here in the corner of the countrie, where you see a temple of idols, where you see many villanous abhominations. This is then as a vengeance which you feele for your sinnes, for as much as you haue not been woorthy to enter into the lande, which I did promise you. See then how God would chastise his people, when he suffereth them to dwell nigh vnto the temple of Peor. And at this day, when we are mingled among idolaters, and perceiue what vnclenesse they commit and how they peruert all religion, let vs knowe that God by this meanes doth punish vs, or at least humbleth vs because of our sinnes. And indede considering this, we ought not onely to lament for the sinnes which are cõmitted by these incredulous and vnbeleeuing persons, but also because we know that we are not woorthy to haue the woorde wholy reformed, and to behold an agreement & harmonie in religion, that God might be in all places purely worshipped, that when we are so neere to the superstitions of others,

that we be constrained to see some of the markes and signes, and to heare something thereof, wee must impute this to our owne sinnes. But how so euer it bee, God ceaseth not to giue a good remedie to the people of Israel; for when the lawe was in this sort taught by Moyses, it was al one, as if God shoulde separate his, from those miserable blinde ones, which wandered and went astray in their superstitions. Now hereupon we haue to note, that although all the worlde be peruerted, and that in it wee see greate confusions, and that al is full of errours and corruptions, yet notwithstãding it behoueth that we haue recourse to the worde of God, to be guided thereby, which must strengthen vs in such sort, that we may defie all the superstitions of idolaters. And if we be so ful fraughted with vanitie, that we giue ouer our selues to decline and to turne aside hither and thither, after that God shal haue giuen vs his worde, there remayneth then no excuse. For (as I haue already saide) this shoulde bee a brydle good ynough for vs, that God declareth to vs his will. Although all the worlde drawe backward, and some haue one fantasie, and others make a faire shewe of some religion, yet al this must bee esteemed as vaine and triuolous, after that we haue heard the voice of our God, and by that shall haue intelligence of his will. And therefore let vs put to our vse this certaine and infallible doctrine, the worde of God, to withdrawe vs from all wicked opinions, from all euill errours, from all that the Diuell hath forged and counterfeited, and from al that men shal haue inuented and deuised in the world. Thus ye see what we haue to beare in minde, when Moses maketh mention here of the temple of Peor. Nowe hee also addeth, that this was after the two kinges, Og the king of Bashan, & Sehon the king of the Amorites, or of Heshbon, were discomfited. This circumstance serueth to reproue the people, if they shoulde not yeelde themselues in all obedience vnto God. Wee knowe that according to the benefite GOD bestoweth on vs, we ought so much the more to be stirred vp and prouoked to loue and to feare him. God hath shewed himselfe bountifull and liberal towardes vs: ought it not to drawe vs so much the more vnto him? For when a mortal man is indebted and bounde vnto vs for some benefite and good turne, shal he not bee accounted dissolute and verie vnthankeful, if he reknowledge not the good wee did him? Nowe then shal there be lesse excuse towards the liuing God? [illegible] then remember that Moyses in this place maketh expresse mention

of these two kinges, which were vanquished and subdued to the end
the people should reknowledge this benefite in this maner: Wee
we haue had here two excellent victories. When heretofore we ar-
rem pres warre against the commaundement of God: our enimies
with great courage gaue vs the foile, there was in vs no strength:
our enimies were as waspes, which come to put out our eyes, as the
similitude hereof hath been before geuen: there are now two kinges
strong and mighty ouerthrowne, and subdued, without any cost of
ours, God hath deliuered them into our handes. Who hath been the
cause of both these victories? Hath it not been God, which hath ruled
& gouerned all herein? Sithence then it is so, that he hath pity on vs,
and hath begon to accomplish the promise which hee made to our fa-
thers, & that we haue already so good a warrant & gage therof, ought
not wee to endeuour to yéeld our selues wholly to our God? Ought
wee not in all things to bee subiect vnto him? Ought wee not to giue
our selues ouer into his hand, which he hath shewed so strong by rea-
son of the loue hee beareth vs? See I say how Moses hath vnderstood
this, which he reciteth touching the ouerthrow of Sehon & Og, where
to reproue the vnthankfulnesse of the people, if they submit not them-
selues willingly to the seruice of their God, to whom they were so
much bound. But now we ought also to apply this doctrine to our
owne vse: that is, ỹ as often as wée perceiue in our selues anyll outh
or lithernesse in the businesse of the Lord, any remisse negligence, any
colones, any rebellió of the flesh, which striueth & stoutely resisteth
in such sort, that we come not to God with so cheerful and earnest affe-
ction as were requisit, that then we enter into a count of the benef-
fites wée haue receiued of him, to say: Wretched creature, how art
thou so negligét, that thou cleauest not to thy God, when he hath de-
clared his will vnto vs? Consider what thou holdest of him, consider
the benefits he hath bestowed on thée, euen vnto this houre. So then
let euery one examine & consider, howe farre hée is indebted to God,
that wée may bée the more prouoked to serue him. And in general let
vs know that hée not onely created vs, when wee were not: but also
that after that hée had redéemed vs, by the blood of our Lorde Iesus
Christ, as he redéemed his people out of the lande of Egypt: hée hath
by his grace drawne vs too him: so as wée haue the doctrine of the
Gospell deliuered vs, which is all one, as if hée had retained vs vnder
his garde and protection, and daily bee-

effectes? for what greater aides and succours haue we from him in
our infirmities? Should we not a thousande times bee ouercome of
Satan, if our God had not his hand stretched out to succour vs? Yes
verily, we should be then all ouer come, and not onely oppressed,
but also swalowed vp in our temptatiõs, without such a stay and re-
fuge as I haue saide. Seyng then it is so, that our Lorde ceaseth not to
continue dayly his goodnes towardes vs, let vs on our parte anuise
our selues and endeuor to take this occasiõ, to serue him with a more
ardent desire, and greater zeale, as we se it is here spoken. In this
sense it followeth, that Moses speaketh to the people of Israel saying,
Heare, O Israel, the lawe which the Lord hath caused to be proposed
vnto you, that ye may learne it, and obserue it. Heere againe Moses
setteth downe the preface, of which before wee toke some vewe, that
the Lawe is not giuen onely, to the ende that men should heare it, to
knowe what it conteineth: but that by it we should also be reformed,
and that God might proue herein what subiection we yelde vnto
him. In seeke wordes, we se that the doctrine of God consisteth in
practise, and that we muste by our doinges shewe, that we haue not
in vaine beene taught it. Nowe then Moses saieth in the first place,
Heare the Lawe which I propose in your eares, to the ende you
should learne it: As if he should say, that God will not that the doc-
trine which is preached vnto vs in his name and authoritie, should
fall to the grounde: but that we muste receiue it with all diligence,
and apply our whole studies therein. For what is the cause that we
profite so euil in the worde of God, but that we are ouermuch bus-
sied in the thinges of the worlde? And if we come to the Sermon, if we
reade the holy scripture, it is but for fashion and manners sake: we
seeke not to performe our duelies as we ought, in obseruing that
which is taught vs. But let vs anuise our selues to bee better and
more diligent schollers, while the Lorde vouchsafeth to instruct vs by
his worde: and that is the cause why Moses saieth hee hath tolde the
Lawe in their eares. Indeede, this maner of speaking would bee
very harde in our tongue: howebeit, it importeth as much, as if God
should say, That he speaketh not vnto vs in an vnknowen & strange
language, but sheweth himselfe in as plaine and familiar maner as
may bee desired. Seeing then it is so, that God commeth downe vnto
vs in such sorte, as to make a plaine and familiar declaration of his
will, what excuse shal we haue to alledge, if his worde be lost in vs,

or if it slipps from vs, or if we kepe it not to make our profite thereof: It is true, that for asmuch as we are ouer dull and ignorant, we shall alwayes finde much obscuritie in the worde of God, that the language of the Lord is too high & profound for vs, but to whom should the fault therof be imputed? Let vs note therefore, that al they which complaine, that the worde of God is harde and obscure, as if it were hid vnder an vnknowne tongue, are here reproued of a manifest lie. Yea, that they do God great iniurie, yea, blaspheme him, for that they dispitefully dissemble, & denie the bountie & goodnesse, which Moses protesteth was shewed the people at ỳ publishing of the law, for it is there saide, that God spake to the eares of the people by the mouth of Moses. So that the doctrine which he deliuered, ought to haue bene throughly knowne of them. [illegible] at this day we haue lesse occasion to vse this shift, to alledge that we vnderstand nothing of that which is conteined in holie Scripture: for GOD speaketh so neerelie and familiarly vnto vs, that we neede but to haue our eares cleansed and prepared to heare him. And let vs note, that there remaineth nothing, but that we be attentiue & diligent to profite in the doctrine of saluatiõ. But withal let vs cal to mind that we haue alreadie touched, namely, that this doctrine must be kept & followed throughly: for if we doe not allowe the worde of God, and yelde our consents that it is good, and true, and holie, God is muche beholding vnto vs. What must we doe then? See: God will make a triall whether he shal be maister ouer vs, or no. Now [illegible] the worde of God rule our life, that is, if we not only inquire after that which he telleth vs, but forsake our naughtie lustes and desires, and endeuour onely to please him, and to be gouerned by him, and his righteousnes: when we come to this, then see we one good proofe, that he hath such dominion and superioritie ouer vs, as he deserueth. But, vntill we haue profited so much, that we are come hither, let vs not thinke that we haue profited any thing at all in the doctrine which hath here ben taught vs. Let this worde therefore of Doing be often called to minde, and imprinted in memorie of them, which heare the worde of God. As how? Beholde, God doth vs this courtesie in vouchsafing to teach vs. And why is that? Is it to this end, that we should onely lend our eares to say in the end, Yea: well said, this is good: Nay, but to the ende our life should be reformed, and because it is a true and certeine rule that we should not erre as we haue done, and as many poore igno-

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rant wretches doe which are straied from the right way, and are not instructed as wee are, vnto whome this doctrine ought to serue for mortification and newnesse of life: that God may beare rule ouer vs, and that we be subiect to him. Thus we see in effect what Moyses meant, when he protested vnto the people in this preface, that hée set before them the lawe, not that they shoulde heare it, and so but haue their eares beaten therwith: but that they should receiue it and kéepe it. Nowe for the better confirmation of this, hée alledgeth: That God had made his couenant with that people on the mount Horeb, the better to perswade them to feare God, and to continewe in his obedience. For if God would only require of vs that which is his due, yet were wée sufficiently bounde to cleaue vnto him, and to obserue his commandementes: but when it pleaseth him of his infinite goodnesse to couenant with vs, to binde himselfe vnto vs, when hée néedeth not: to stand on articles with vs, that he wilbe our father & sauiour, that he wil receiue vs for his flocke and heritage, that wée may liue vnder his gard and protection, offering vs euerlasting life: séeing that he doeth al theše thinges, ought not our heart to bée softened though it were of stone? When the creatures beholde that the liuing God abaseth himself hitherto, as to treate the matter with vs, and to say: Goe to, let vs consider what wée are, both you sée what an infinite distance is betweene you and mee, and know that I could commande you what séemeth good to mée, and not haue any thing to deale with you, and that you are not worthie to come nigh mée, or to haue any acquaintance with him, which can command what he wil without any further declaration than this. Sée, this I will, and this is my minde: yet loe I yéelde of my right, I come héere to offer my selfe to be your guide and sauiour, I will [illegible] you, you shalbe my familie, if so be that you wil content your selues with my worde. I wilbe your king, and you shal be my subiects: and for all this, thinke you not that the couenãt which I haue made with your fathers, was to gaine any thing of you: for I haue no néede nor want of any thing whatsoeuer, and what benefite can you bestowe on me? But al which I haue done and doe, is onely for your profite, and for your welfare. I am then here readie to couenant by articles with you and to binde my selfe vnto you on my part. Séeing I say, that the liuing God doth abase himselfe so farre, I pray you shal not we be too vnthankfull, if we be not herewith beaten downe to humble our selues vnder him,

laying aſide all our pride and hautineſſe? It is not therefore without cauſe, that Moyſes ſpeaketh héere of the couenant which God hath made with his people, to the ende that eſpecially his fauour and goodneſſe ſhoulde bée knowen. Nowe if this was to bee done in the time of the lawe, there is at this day much greater reaſon thereof: for the Lorde hath not only made a couenant for one time, as with the Iewes: but when hée ſent his onely ſonne, then declared hée himſelfe to be our father and ſauiour much more fully than before he had done, and that after ſo ſwéete, ſo gratious, and ſo amiable a manner, as nothing more: in ſuch ſort that he hath here as it were laide forth his bowelles of loue and compaſſion towardes vs. Séeing therefore God hath preſented vnto vs his hearte in the perſon of our Lorde
Iohn. 15. Ieſus Chriſt, and wée heare beſides the proteſtation which Ieſus
15. Chriſt maketh, that hée will call vs no more his ſeruaunts, but his friendes: becauſe hée hath ſo familiarly communicated vnto vs al the ſecrets of his will: muſt it not I beſeeche you néedes bée, that the Diuel hath bewitched vs, if wée bée not héereby mouéd to frame our ſelues wholy vnto him, renouncing euen our ſelues, and all our affections? So then, when we perceiue in our ſelues any wickednelle, whereby we are hindred to ſerue God, when we féele our ſelues idly diſpoſed in the [illegible] of the Lord, & are euen brought into an heauie ſléepe by the cares [illegible] world, to ſtirre our ſelues vp to praiſe our God, let vs haue in [illegible] couenant which the Lorde hath made with vs. Nowe héere [illegible] further addeth: The Lorde made not this couenant with [illegible], but with vs, euen with vs which are aliue at this day. This place may bée vnderſtoode after two ſortes: for it may bee taken for a compariſon which Moſes maketh, the better to declare, that the people which then liued, ought to bée ſo much the more diligent in the ſeruice of God, becauſe they had receiued greater benefites than their fathers. In which ſenſe hée ſpeaketh
Exo. 6.3. in Exodus, I haue not communicated this name to your fathers: where God ſpeaking vnto Moſes ſaith, that he declared not himſelfe ſo plainly to bee God to Abraham, Iſaac, and Iacob, as he [illegible] vnto Moſes. And by this he ſignifieth, that the people ſhould be now more attentiue, becauſe God had reuealed himſelfe vnto them after an vnaccuſtomed manner. Euen ſo in this place one may vnderſtand this, God hath not made ſuch a couenant with your fathers. It is true that God ſpake vnto his ſeruants Abraham, Iſaac, & Iacob, and did

sufficiently instruct them. And it is expressly said in the. 18. of Gen. Shall I hide from my seruant Abraham, that which I will now execute vpon Sodome, and Gomorrha? For I know that hee wil instruct his household in my decrees and ordinaunces, in my statutes and iudgements. Se then how Abraham instructed his family, not after some bare and naked manner, but in the iudgementes and statutes and ordinaunces of the Lord. Briefly, we must needes say that Abraham had the lawe of God imprinted in his heart: yet los besides a benefite not to be contemned, when God hath sent his law in the two tables, to the end the instruction thereof might remaine and abide for euer to his people, and that the thinges therein conteined, might be ratified for euer, and testified to al posterity as well as to them. We see then what we may gather vppon this sentence, euen as much as if Moses should haue said vnto his people. Beloued, acknowledge we the benefite the Lord bestoweth on vs this day, euē such an one as our fathers haue receiued none the like: for he deliuered not vnto them the law by writing, as vnto vs, he hath not declared to them these thinges in such plaine order. True it is, that he did sufficiently instruct them, & as much as was necessary and requisite for their saluation: but here is yet an higher degree and further stepp, to which we are come at this day, and therefore we ought to draw so much the neerer to him, seeing wee see that he hath so stooped vnto vs. And this is the meaning of Moses [illegible] vnderstand the place in this sense. As if a man shoulde say [illegible] this day, that God hath not done so to our fathers, as he hath [illegible] vnto vs. And this is that which Christ said to his disciples, That many Kings and Prophets haue desired to see those thinges which you see, & heare those things preached with you heare, and yet haue not had their desire. Seeing then it is so, that God of his infinite mercie & goodnesse vouchsafeth to preferre vs before the Patriarches and Prophetes, (as it is also said, that the Prophets serued not so much their owne time as ours) we ought with greater diligence to suffer our selues to bee taught vnder [illegible], & to apply our selues wholy to his doctrine. Notwithstanding, when all is well considered, although this wee haue alleadged be profitable, and the exhortation is often brought in holy Scripture, yet when we shall haue weighed all the wordes, we shall finde that Moses, when hee saieth that God did not make his couenaunt with them which heard the law the first day it was published, mea-

Gen. 18. 17. 19.

Mat. 13. 17. Luke. 10. 24.

1. Pet. 1. 12.

neth to say, that not onely with them hée made his couenaunt, but also with those which ouerliued them, and succéeded in the place of those which were dead. So that in fewe wordes Moses woulde here declare, that the lawe was not transitorie, to endure only for the life of them which first hearde it, but that it was a doctrine which shoulde reteine his strength & authoritie for euer. The Lord our God (saith hee) hath not made a couenant with our fathers, that is to say, he would not only haue our fathers for his people, he was not tied to them, so that his lawe should serue but for fortie or fiftie yéeres, but hée hath made a couenaunt with vs as well, and with them which were not borne when the law was published. You then which were not at the mount of Horeb, which haue not séene the fire on the mountaine, nor heard the thunderinges, know you notwithstanding that your God did then adopt you also to him selfe, and that he made a couenaunt, in the which you also were comprised. You must therefore obserue his lawe, because it hath béene established to bée perpetuall, to endure from age to age, and to bée preached euen to the ende of the worlde. And this is the true and naturall meaning of Moses. And from hence we may gather a good and profitable doctrine: namely, that although we were not at first when the Gospell was published, although wee haue not séene with our eyes those thinges which are mentioned in the law, yet ought we not therefore to haue in lesse estimation & price the authoritie of the word of God. And why? I graunt that when God raised vp Moses, it was an especiall token of his fauour and goodnesse towardes the people, which then liued: yet notwithstanding, the authoritie of the Lawe must not at any time bée diminished: for it cõteineth the truth of God which alwayes abideth, and is not variable and transitorie, as men are. It is said, that men are as a flowre, or as an herbe, which by and by drieth and withereth, but the truth of the Lord endureth for euer. Now this truth which is vnchaungeable, is conteined in the Lawe. Truely the Lawe as touching the ceremonies is vtterly abolished: but as touching ỳ substance & doctrine which it conteineth, it reteineth alwayes his force & power still: not one iot thereof falleth away or perisheth. So then let vs note, that though we haue not liued in the time of Moses, this serueth not to alledge, that we may therefore contemne the admonitions he hath giuen & are conteined in the lawe. And why? For he hath spoken to vs, he hath not only spoke to the multitude which was assem-

Isay. 40. 6 7.

1. Pet. 1. 24.

bled

bled at mount Horeb, but generally to the whole worlde. And if this be saide of the lawe, by a greater & more strong reason is it to be saide of the Gospel. For as we haue saide, the law concerning the shadowes thereof, is cleane done away, but the Gospel hath no suche thing. For in it our Lord maketh a newe & euerlasting testament, & a couenant to last from generation to generation. Howe then must wee be affected, whē the Gospel is preached? We must remember that the sonne of God came into the world, not onely to instruct them, with whom hee was conuersant in his manhode: but that hee hath wonne vs to God his father, and hath called vs to saluation, by sending his Apostles, that their voice should sound to the endes of the worlde, to them which heard not him, to make them partakers of the doctrine of saluation: the which at this day also wee ought to receiue, as if Iesus Christ were yet in the middest of vs, or as if the Apostles with their owne mouthes did speake vnto vs. And this is that which wee haue to beare in minde vpon this place, that we make no alteration in the Churche of GOD, neither attempt to chaunge any thing in his worde, knowing that hee will alwayes haue kepte therein one equall traine. For seeing that he hath deliuered vnto vs his Gospel, and stablished a certeine rule of regiment in the time of the Apostles, and in the primitiue Church, we must hold the same, and theron rest our selues. If wee doe otherwise, it is as if wee woulde make the worde of God mortall and corruptible with vs. So then let vs learne, that though the worlde be variable and inconstant, and hath euerie day his backturning: and though there bee none of vs, whiche hath not alwayes many gadding opinions, whiche trotte in our braine, that yet not withstanding, concerning that the worde of God hath appointed, we are not to take that libertie, to doe at one time this, and at an other time that, as we list, and as we fansie. Wherefore: Because God hath not made this couenaunt with our fathers, but with vs which are aliue at this day. As long then as we are in the worlde, let vs knowe, that Gods gouerning of vs, and his shewing vs the way, is to the end we should not be as wandering pilgrimes to stray hither and thither, and to raunge as our lusts and appetites turne vs: but that we should be conducted as by his hand. To be short, whereas Moses saith, Heare we that are all aliue at this day, it is to declare & prooue, that men during their life time, ought not to forge any newe Laine, that they ought not to haue to day one, to morrowe an other.

And why? For the life of man is in the lawe of God, which ought to suffice vs. Let vs then make our profite by regarding the thinges that tend thereunto. And further, it is no doubt, but Moses here chargeth the people with vnthankfulnesse which should be in them, if they dedicate not their liues to the seruice of God: as if he should say, How liue wee? Is it not for that the Lorde hath placed vs in this worlde? If then our life we haue, be giuen of him: ought we not to bestowe it & employ it in his seruice? Ought it not to be wholie consecrated to his will? We see then howe Moses reprooueth heere al them which wander, and continue not their course in the worde of God. Let vs withall reteine in memorie that which I haue aboue touched: that is, that we haue not a doctrine for three dayes, but one wherein wee must bee confirmed as long as we liue. Therfore when we haue once receiued and embraced that which is conteined in the holie scripture, let vs studie to profite our selues by it, and to go forward, encreasing in the knowledge & practise of it, till God shal draw vs out of this worlde, knowing that he will vouchsafe to take vs into his couenaunt, and that hee for his parte will not be vnfaithfull and vnconstant, but sure and stedfast in his purpose and promise. Let vs doe the like, that wee may be ioyned to him: and as long as wee liue let vs haue no other purpose, but to cleaue vnto him, howebeit as he hath declared in his worde. But let vs not thinke to ioyne and vnite our selues to our God by our owne fantasies: but since hee commeth vnto vs, let vs goe vnto him, and when we are come thither, let vs take good heede to stay our selues there. And thus we see what we haue to gather vpon this place, to the ende we may the better bee disposed and prepared to receiue the instructions, which shall hereafter be geuen vs, concerning the lawe of God and his Commaundements.

Nowe let vs cast our selues downe before the maiestie of our good God, with acknowledging of our sins, desiring him to make vs feele them better than wee haue done, in suche sort that we desire nothing but to yeelde our selues wholie vnto him: and that it will please him to reach vs his hand, and not suffer vs to be wedded to our owne fantasies, and affections, that wee may alwayes magnifie his goodnesse, which hee vseth towardes vs, that we may profite by it, in rendring vnto him that obedience and dutie which he deserueth, especially, for that it hath pleased him to bring and deliuer vnto vs his lawe, and that he is not onely contented to shew vs the way of well liuing,

but

but hath vouchsafed also to adopt vs for his children, and to declare himselfe our father and saviour, for our Lorde Jesus Christes sake. That hee will not only graunt this grace to vs, but to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

Deut. Chap. 5.

1 Then Moses called all Israel and saide vnto them, Heare, O Israel, the ordinaunces and the lawes which I set before you this day, that yee may learne them, and take heede to observe them.

2 The Lord our God made a couenant with vs in Horeb.

3 The Lorde made not this couenant with our fathers, but with vs, which are all aliue at this day.

4 The Lorde talked with you face to face on the mount out of the middest of the fire.

WE haue séene héeretofore howe greatly Moyses hath laboured to make the people perceiue the maiestie which is in the worde of God, to the ende they shoulde receiue it with al reuerence and feare. For although men protest that they will obey God, (for so nature constrayneth them,) yet can they not order themselues and their doinges according to his worde: and that is the veris true touchstone to knowe whether wée bée obedient to God or no. But herein is the rebellion of the worlde séene, that although all will confesse that the worde of God is to bée receiued without any gainsaying, yet shal one finde scarse one among an hundred, which willingly humbleth himselfe to yelde vnto it that authoritie it deserueth. And why is this? Surely, because we consider not of the maiestie of God, which declareth it selfe therein. Sée then howe Moyses, not without cause, so often heeretofore hath warned the people, that the worde of God shoulde be of such maiestie towardes vs, that all creatures shoulde tremble at it. And nowe againe hee adderh a confir-

confirmation of the same matter when he saith, That the lord talked face to face on the mount, out of the middest of the fire: as if hee should say: You haue no cause nowe to doubte whether the doctrine which I propose vnto you, be of God or of men: for it is sufficiently proued. God hath declared himselfe vnto you by plaine and visible signes, in such sorte, that you may well perceiue, it is hee which speaketh. Nowe then wee see the intent and meaning of Moyses. But before wee passe any further, one may heere make a question, Howe is it said that God spake face to face, seeing that men cannot comprehende his infinite glorie? For with what eye can wee contemplate his substance & being? We are so fraile & weak, that if God should but shew one beame of his brightnesse, behold, we should be al dazeled & confounded therwith. On the other side we know how it is said, That we cannot see god face to face, vntil we be renewed, which shal not bee vntil the latter day. For now (saith S. Paule) Wee see as in a glasse, & in part, euen obscurely and imperfectly. Which more is, he saith in another place, That the gospel at this day doth present vnto vs the maiestie of God, in such sorte, that wee may see it, but the lawe was darke and obscure, and had a vaile which hindered our fathers to knowe God, in so plaine and familiar a manner as wee doe at this day. But all this agreeth very well. For when wee make a comparison of the lawe with the Gospell, it is certaine we shall finde this which Saint Paule speaketh to bee most true. For then God declared not himself in so familiar a fashion as he doth vnto vs, by the meanes of our Lorde Jesus Christ, who is the liuely ymage of him. Nowe a dayes therefore, there are layde open vnto vs the great treasures of wisdome, in that God calleth vs to the kingdome of heauen, & sheweth that he holdeth vs for his children & heires. Now this was not in the time of the lawe. And yet, although at this day we haue such a knowledge and so plaine and manifest, yet remaineth that alwayes true which we haue alledged, that wee see but in parte. And why? For we are not yet partakers of the glorie of God, neither can wee come neere it, but it behoueth that he shewe it according to our rudenesse and infirmitie. Yet notwithstanding, from the beginning of the world God hath appeared vnto mortall men. Howbeit, this was not to shew himselfe as hee is, but as the weakenes and infirmitie of men might beare it. Wee must then note, that God was not knowen to the fathers, neither appeareth at this day in his owne

1. Cor. 13. 12.

2. Cor. 3. 14. & 18.

Heb. 1. 3.

being:

being: but he applieth himselfe to vs, in asmuch as he sheweth himselfe for our measure and abilitie, to make vs perceiue that hee is present. And yet for al that, it is not without cause, that Moses saith here, that God spake face to face: for he vnderstandeth hereby, that the people had not some conjectural signe, that they might doute of him, or conceiue onely some final opinion of God, but that they had a certaine and infallible warrant: whereby they might in this sorte conclude: Behold, God hath so shewed himselfe to vs, that our faith need not waner and be doubtful: and the doctrine which is proposed vnto vs in his name, ought no longer to be disputed of, whether it be to be receiued or refused. And why? For God hath delinered vnto vs a sure and certaine marke, which cannot beguile, nor leaue vs in dout, but that this doctrine procedeth from him. Now we vnderstand the meaning of Moses, from whence wee haue to gather a good lesson, that is, that if God declare not himself vnto vs after so high & glorious a manner as our lust desireth, let vs know that he doeth it for our profite and saluation. For let vs haue an eye to our infirmitie, & it will be sufficient to abate that ouerboldnesse, to the which our nature alwayes sturreth vs. For wee would inquire and seeke after the secrets of God, without end or measure: And why is that? Verily, because we consider not our owne power and abilitie. Wherefore let vs praise the great goodnes of our God, for that hee in fauour so considereth of vs, & regardeth our weakenesse, that he is content to hide his glorie, least we should be swallowed vp therof. For as I haue alreadie said, we cannot beare it, being so fraile & weake as we are. And herewithal let vs knowe, that when God giueth vs some euident signe and token of his presence, there resteth then no excuse, if wee yeld not to him the honour, and do him the homage he is worthy of. Let vs not then desire that GOD come in his inestimable glorie, that the Heauens cleaue in sunder, that all the Angels of Heauen appeare: but when the Lorde any way declareth, that it is he which speaketh, let it suffice vs, and let vs humble our selues incontinently. For if then we wil foreslowe to yeld him our duetie, we shalbe sharply reprooued for turning our backe to him, when hee sheweth his face to vs. It is true that it is said in another place, That men cannot see the face of God, & liue. And although Moses had a wonderfull reuelation of the glorie of God, as he speaketh in Exodus 33: That the Lord spake face to face vnto him, as a man speaketh vnto his friend: *Exo. 33. 20* *Iud. 13. 22* *Exo. 33. 11*

yet is it ſaide, That hée ſawe but the backe of God onely: but this is to the end alwaies to ſhew vs, that while we be enuironed in this fleſh, wée ought not to approche vnto the maieſtie of GOD, or thinke to mount ſo high. For if the very Angels of heauen, vnder the figure of Cherubims, hyde their eyes, when there is any mention of the appearance of God, what muſt we do which doe but traile here and creepe on the ground? But howſoeuer it bee, God will condemne vs of vnthankfulneſſe, when we will not beholde his face, & bée ſufficiently contented with thoſe viſible ſignes, which he sheweth vs of his preſence. Aboue al, let vs be mindeful of this, when any queſtion is of ſubmitting our ſelues both to the law and the goſpel. For it is there eſpecially, that God will bée knowen of vs, to the intent they ſhoulde worſhippe him, receyuing ſimply whatſoeuer commeth out of his mouth. To what purpoſe then ſhall wée apply this ſentence of Moyſes? Forſooth to this, that when the Scripture is ſet before vs, when one preacheth and expoundeth it vnto vs, or that wée our ſelues reade it, this ſpeeche of his muſt ſerue to humble vs, to the ende that God may bée with al reuerence exalted, and that wée preſume not to make any replie to his worde: but that wée tremble at it, as he ſpeakes therof to the Prophet Eſay. For all that which is conteined in the holy Scripture, is in ſuch ſort prooued, that one may ſay, that God hath ſpoken to men euen after a viſible manner. Now Moſes after this addeth, That he ſtoode betweene the Lord and them, as a mediatour betweene God and men, becauſe the people feared, and durſt not aſcende vp into the mount. Wherby Moyſes ſignifieth, that though the lawe were brought by a mortall man, yet ought it not to be derogation to the authoritie therof. And why? Becauſe this was for the inſtruction of the people: ſo that the faulte reſted in them. And this place is wel worthy the noting. For wée alwaies ſeeke ſome ſtarting holes, to the ende wée might let light by the worde of God. Truely, wée doe not pretend it openly, but in couert, but yet all the worlde is ſet vppon this wickednes, ſo that a man ſhal finde, men thinke themſelues well, and of very good reſt, when they can finde any colour to ſay: Oh, I knowe not whether this be the word of God, or no: I know not whether it be ſpoken to me, I know not what condition it hath. Thus ye ſée how the world ſeeketh alwaies to exempt it ſelfe from the obedience to Gods worde. And this excuſe is ouer cõmon, to ſay: Yea, it is true, that God ought to be

Exod. 6. 2.

Eſay. 66. 2

obeyed,

obeyed, but they be but men, which preache it to vs, as vnto vs: must we then receiue their doctrine, as if Angels appeared to vs from heauen? Many thinke it sufficeth to say thus, when notwithstanding they shew themselues herein rebellious to God, or rather they haue no care to submit themselues to him & his worde. But we haue here one answer to cut off all such vain allegations, that is, when God sendeth his worde by the hand & ministerie of men, hee doth it, because of our fault & infirmitie. Howbeit, he ceaseth not to shew vs some marke of his glorie, in such sort, that his worde may be knowne to be heauenly: & so that being duely considered, it is euident, that God hath warranted enough, & more than enough. Neither hath Moses spoken this onely for the instruction of the auncient fathers, but this admonition serueth also for vs: that if men, as we are, be appointed messengers to preach vnto vs the worde of God, it ought not in our estimation derogate any thing from the maiestie thereof. And in very deede wee consider litle of our owne frailtie & weakneſſe, when we desire that God should teach vs by miracles euerie day, & we know not what is meet & conuenient for vs. For as for miracles, there haue beene enow alreadie shewed, to confirme the truth, both of the Lawe, & of the Gospel, that wee might haue a full & certeine assurance of them. Yet, it is most behoofull, that God dealeth so mercifullie with vs, that hee sendeth men like to our selues, & committeth vnto them the charge and office of teaching vs in his name, and in his roume, as one that allureth vs vnto him selfe, with all kindenesſe & gentlenesſe. For can we thinke our selues able to sustaine and abide his presence, if he should appeare to vs as he is? Alas, we should be all vtterly consumed, if God should speake in his maiestie and power. We know it is said, That the voice of the Lord is enough to shake mightie rockes, & moue huge mountaines out of their places: & can we which are so feeble & weake, as nothing more, stand before so puissaunt a power, & not be daunted, & cast down, as with the force of some behemōt thunder, to the bottomlesse pit of hell? Let vs note then, that when God hath ordeined, that his worde should be preached to vs by men, & committed to writing: therein he applieth him selfe to our weakenes, and dealeth with vs, as if he were a mortal man, to the end we should not feare to come vnto him, being drawne by so great lenitie and gentlenesſe. And withall let vs consider, what honour he doeth vs, when hee vouchsafeth to chuse out from among vs poore and vile

Psal. 29.

wretches, to represent his person, and to speake vnto vs in his name. For what greater thing could he yeelde vnto the Angels of heauen? What more honourable charge & office could he commit vnto them? Therefore when he daineth & vouchsafeth men of so great and excellent honour, as to carrie abroad his word as his Embassadours, doth he not declare vnto vs in this one thing his more than fatherlie goodnesse toward vs? Now on the other side he maketh trial of our humilitie. For if he should thunder from heauen, if he should appeare in visible maner, if the Angels should descend vnto vs, we néede not greatly meruell, if men did giue credit to his word: but when all both great & small receiue the order which God hath set in his Church, as they yeelde obedience to his word when it is preached, therein is our faith tried. But in the meane while let vs alwayes remember this, that God hath sufficiently declared him selfe to men, so that we haue no occasion at all to doubt of his word, & to dispute whence it commeth. For his will is made more than certein, if so be we be not vnthankfull in receiuing the signes which he hath giuen vs. Thus ye see then, what we haue to note in this place, when Moses saieth, The people durst not approche nigh to the hill, for the great feare they had conceiued. And although at this day wee refuse not, but that God should speake vnto vs: yet when all is well considered, it should not bée profitable for vs. And therefore let vs know, that thus ought not to leessen the certeintie and assurance of our faith, when God thus vseth the meanes & ministerie of men. It is said consequently, That God hath taught his people, saying: I am the eternall or euerliuing thy God, which hath brought thée out of the land of Egypt, thou shalt haue no other GOD before my face. In this place, GOD, to holde his people as with a bridle in obedience, telleth them, that the knowledge they haue, ought to keepe them farre from all superstitions. For it is no straunge thing to sée the Heathen haue their idolles, and to runne affraye after their errours and fantasies, if wée remember what man is in him selfe. Wée are also so giuen to vanitie, that it is lamentable to beholde, neither néede wée to goe to schole to learne to bée deceiued: for euerie man heerein is a great Doctour in that case: briefly, wée all runne to euill, though vnder the cloke and colour of that which is good: so that for the true seruice of GOD, there is nothing in vs, but superstition and idolatrie: and so the Gentiles haue had their diuers kindes of superstition: for euerie

ons hath forged vnto what at his pleasure, and all this while the liuing GOD hath bene left and forsaken of all. And why? Because GOD vouchsafed not to be so gratious to all the worlde, to declare him selfe vnto them. Marke then howe men were become as beastes in their opinions, and that was for default of teaching: although for all this they are not holde excused, for they are alwayes guiltie before GOD, forasmuch as the fountaine of Idolatrie proceedeth from their owne malice, and vnthankfulnesse, when as men by their owne motion haue forsaken the euerliuing GOD. But when the worlde was growne out of kinde, the poore Gentiles wandered like blinde men in darkenesse, for they wanted the light to shewe them the way of saluation. Nowe heere the Lorde accuseth the Israelites of rebellion, if they obserue not the Lawe which he hath giuen. Why so? I am the euerliuing thy GOD. When he saieth, The euerliuing: it is to exclude other Gods, which are inuented of men. As if hee should say, There is but one Godhead, and that is found in me: it must needes then be concluded, that they, which hauing knowne mee, turne them selues after their owne, haue no excuse to alledge, that they haue not willingly and wittingly renounced the liuing GOD. Nowe, when hee addeth, That he is the GOD of his people: this is to shewe that he hath sufficiently declared him selfe to be knowne vnto them, as if he did say: I haue separated you from among the rest of men: you see howe others wander, and that because they lacke wherewith to guide, and direct them: but I haue chosen you for my people, and I haue giuen my selfe to you. Seeing then I am your GOD: holde your selues to mee, otherwise you shall haue much lesse excuse than the Paynims. My vengeance must needes be double vpon you: yea, an hundred times more grieuous than vppon other, because you haue falsified the promise, and broken the couenaunt which I made with you. He alledgeth yet further the fauour he did shewe to his people, when he saieth, That he brought them out of the lande of Egypt, out of the house of bondage: whereby he signifieth, that he hath so bounde the people vnto him, that they can not reuolte, but that they shall deserue to be more grieuously punished. For when they shall haue forgotten the redemption, by the whiche they were deliuered out of bondage, shoulde not their vnthankfulnesse bee double, when being deliuered by so mightie an

hande, they yelde not them ſelues wholie to the ſeruice of their Re-
deemer? And of purpoſe doeth he call Egypt, The houſe of bondage, to
the ende the people ſhoulo well conſider, in what eſtate they had bin
there. For weeſee howe they, which had ſighed and cried when they
were oppreſſed with ſuche great violence, and tyrannie, (as we read
Exod. 1. of in Exodus) aſſoone as God had delinered them, deſired to returne
thither againe. And whence proceedeth this, but that they remem-
bred not their wrong and oppreſſion, but while they endured it: and
that the Deuill did ſhutte vp their eyes, that they ſhoulde not e-
ſteeme the fauour of God, according to the price and worthineſſe
thereof? That is the cauſe, why Moſes in this place nameth Egypt,
The houſe of bondage. In the ende there is ſet downe the comman-
dement, that the people ſhoulde haue no other God before the face
of him, whome they ought to holde for their God. Nowe let vs ap-
plie this whole doctrine to our vſe.

Firſt therefore, whē it is ſaid, I am the eternal or euerliuing, let vs
learn ſo to weigh the ſenſe & meaning of this word, y whē as the ma-
ieſtie of God appeareth vnto vs, wee imagine no other deitie. For
God can not ſuffer any companion. If the brightneſſe of the Sunne
darken the light of the Starres, is it not great reaſon that whē God
ſheweth him ſelfe, euerie one ſhoulde worſhip him, and that all glo-
rie, which ſhall haue beene before, bee as it were brought to nothing?
Eſai. 60. 9. And this is the cauſe why it is ſaid to the Prophets, That when the
Lorde ſhall reigne, there ſhall then appeare no other brightneſſe but
his: that the Sunne it ſelfe ſhal be dimmed, and that the Moone ſhal
be turned into darkneſſe. This is to ſhewe, that if we mingle with
God the fantaſies of our owne braine, we take away ſo muche from
the right which apperteineth to him: for he can not ſuffer any com-
panion.

It behoueth then, that this worde, Euerliuing, bridle all our fan-
taſies and fond imaginations, in ſuche ſorte, that we preſume not on
the libertie to conceiue this and that, but that we content our ſelues
with this ſimplicitie, to haue one God, and that this ſuffice vs. And
for this cauſe, it is alſo ſaide: That when our Lorde Ieſus ſhall
prepare and eſtabliſhe his ſeate in the worlde, that all the idols
of Egypt ſhall fall to the grounde. Nowe this place apperteineth
vnto vs. For as Moſes ſaide to the people of auncient time,

You

you haue the euerliuing, and therefore it behoueth that all idols be chaced from among you: euen so nowe, sithence God is declared and made manifest vnto vs in the person of his only sonne, al our idolls must fal downe.

Moreouer, we know, that Egypt, aboue al countries of the world besides, was ful fraughted with idols. Therefore, though we haue bene in former times euen plunged in lyes, and errours, and darkenesse, though we haue had an infinite number of idols, yet as soone as God declareth that he is the euerliuing, al must vanish and fal away as water. Nowe, when further he nameth himselfe, Our God, this is to entise vs after so gentle a manner, that his maiestie might be knowen vnto vs in most louing and amiable wise. For if GOD should speake only of his eternitie and soueregne being, we should be al confounded. Of a trueth, this might suffice to condemne all our dotages: yet we in the meane time cannot be fully hereby instructed to our vse and profite. It behoueth then, that after it hath bene declared, that it is he alone whome we ought to reuerence, and to whome we must doe homage: that he come vnto vs all, after a gentle and familiar maner, that we may perceiue him to be our father and maister, and that we may knowe that he wil alis him selfe, and make a couenant with vs, to the ende we should cleaue vnto him. This is meant by the title which he giueth himselfe in this place, saying, I am not onely thy euerliuing, which come here to fright thee: but I am withal thy GOD. I haue chosen thee to my selfe: I wil that thou bee my heritage. So then we nowe see, howe GOD authoriseth his Laive, to the ende we should receiue it in all feare and humilitie, and howe withal he sweeteneth it with his loue, to the ende we should take a taste of it, and with a delight and pleasure, submit our selues vnto it, not refusing to bee gouerned by the doctrine therin contained. And let vs knowe, that we can haue no excuse, if at this day we honour not our GOD in truth, renouncing all our superstitions, and whatsoeuer is contrarie to his seruice. And why? Because he should winne vs to himselfe by these tytles, which are giuen to holde vs in his feare. When hee speaketh of the rule and power he hath ouer vs all: and when hee calleth him selfe, Our God, this ought to make vs taste his fatherly goodnesse. These two thinges are here comprised. Wee se then that there remaineth

remaineth nothing, but that we giue diligent care to that which is declared vnto vs in the lawe of God, and thereon wholie rest and stay our selues. And for this cause he vpbraided the people of Israel, that they neither feared nor loued him. If I be thy God and maister, where is then my feare: If I be thy father, where is my loue? saith hee by his Prophete Malachie. There is no doubt, but the Prophete in this place had respect vnto this which Moyses heere briefly toucheth. For when GOD nameth him selfe, The everliuing, he doeth it to the ende, that wee shoulde beare him due reuerence. When hee nameth himselfe, The God of his people, it is to winne them by loue and gentlenesse, and to shewe, that after he hath elected them, they shoulde giue themselues ouer wholie into his hande. Now if this were vnder the lawe, by greater right it agreeth vnto vs. For although God in the person of his onely sonne woulde as it were be much abased, yet for al this remaineth he alwayes in his glorie, neither is any thing diminished from the highnesse of that maiestie, whereof he here maketh mention. The abasement of our Lord Iesus Christ, is an infallible testimonie of the mercie and loue of our God, yet howsoeuer it be, this ought not to occasion vs to contemne, or to lesse esteeme his maiestie: for God in this sort hath stooped to vs, that he might allure vs to behold with lesse feare his maiestie, and learne to reuerence him in such sorte as wee ought to doe. So then of good right shal hee reproue vs at this day, as being altogether inexcusable, if wee doe not feare and loue him. For hee sheweth himselfe our GOD, and our maister. But where is our feare, when we regard not that hee commaundeth vs, when wee haue hardened our heartes against his threateninges, as if wee woulde dispitefully resist him, when wee continewe in our wickednesse? And although he hath said, He wil be our iudge, & that hee wil one day take an account of our doings: how is it that we make but a iesting & mockerie of it? Where is (I say) the feare which we owe to our God? For it seemeth, that we wil feare a mortal creature more than the liuing God, which hath al preeminence, and superioritie, and maistership ouer vs.

Mal. 1, 6.

Moreouer, it is not ynough that we feare God, after some seruile manner, as being forced thereunto: but wee must haue a loue alwayes ioyned with our feare: For therefore namely hee him selfe, Our Father. And let vs also note, that when he declareth himselfe,

selfe the God of Israel, he meaneth by this word, that he is our Sauiour also. Thou art our God (saith the Prophet Abacuk) and wee cannot perish. So then let vs keepe in minde these titles, so much as they appertayne to vs, and ought to serue this day for our instruction: knowing that the maiestie of God hath a respect in our Lord Iesus Christ. Now let vs marke this which he further addeth for the greater proofe of his loue and fauour: I haue brought you (saith hee) out of the land of Egypt. It is true, that God heere especially bindeth vnto himselfe the people of Israel aboue all other nations, too which ende hee expresly setteth downe the redemption hee had wrought them: But when God speaketh, wee must consider of all the benefites for the which wee are indebted to him, which albeit they are in number infinite and inestimable: yet wee ought at least wise call them to minde, so farre as our small ability may doe, applying all our wits and senses thereto: & perceiuing that wee faile and are behind in this point, let vs straine our selues better to minde them, at least so farre, as to be thereby instructed in the loue and feare of our God. Doth then God speake? Heere must first consider, that this is hee which created vs, wee are therefore his. This one benefite were sufficient to prouoke euery one with all his might to serue and honor God. For what sufficient recompence can wee make him, if there were but this, that hee hath placed vs in this worlde, and of his mercie nourisheth vs heere? But yet when wee shall haue cast our eyes vp on high, or downe below, & take a diligent view of all the tokens hee sheweth vs of his loue, seeing that hee hath created the worlde for our sake, that hee hath appointed all things to our vse, considering that hee hath engrauen his owne image in vs, that wee should bee immortall, vnderstanding that he hath prepared a better heritage for vs then this brittle and transitory life: when we perceiue all these thinges, must it not needes be that wee are more blockish and brutish than beasts, if wee bee not rauished with a feruent desire to worship our GOD, to vowe, and to dedicate our selues wholly vnto him? But yet further than this, wee must make enquiry, and enter into accompt, as well of the benefites which are bestowed on vs all in generall, as which euery one also particularly receiueth, and then beholden it euery one to make his confession with Dauid: Lord, when I thinke on thy benefites, lo my spirite is plunged as it were in some great deapth, they surmount in number

Abac. 1. 12.

Psal. 40. 5.

the hayres of my head, as hee speaketh in the 40. Psalme. Againe, when we shall haue knowne how farre we are al bound to God in generall, let euery one in the priuie chamber of his owne heart consider the benefites which he hath receiued of the handes of God. And in steede of that which was said in olde time to the people of Israel, I haue redeemed you out of the land of Egypt, let vs remember from whence our Lord hath deliuered vs; whē it pleased him to receiue vs into his family & into his church. For we are the children of Adam, by nature cursed, and inheritors of death, we haue nothing in vs but sinne, & so consequently we must needs be accursed before God. Let men please & magnifie themselues as they list, yet behold their birth, behold their nobilities: they are but bondslaues of Sathan, they haue a stinke & bottomlesse gulfe of corruption in them, they are worthy that the wrath & malediction of God fall on their heads: briefly being banished from the kingdome of heauen, they are geuen ouer to all misery & wretchednesse. Now our Lord and God, by the hand of his sonne, hath hence deliuered vs. He hath not sent a Moses, as to the people of auncient time: but not sparing his onely sonne, hee hath deliuered him to death for vs. Seeing then raunsomed with so deere and inestimable a price, as is the holy and sacred blood of the Sonne of God, ought we not wholy too yeld our selues vnto him? And withal let vs note, that if it be said, That Egypt was a house of bondage, what thraldome and seruitude is this, when Sathan holdeth vs in his bondes, and vnder his tyranny, in such sort that we haue no meane to escape death, that we be excluded from all hope of saluation, that GOD is our enemie and aduersarie? How beeyng deliuered from all this, is not our redemption farre more greater and excellent than this, whereof Moses heere speaketh? So in steede that it was sayde to the auncient people, Thy God hath deliuered thee out of the lande of Egypt, it is now saide, That we be redeemed from the bondage of Sathan to liue vnto the Lord, as Saint Paule speaketh in the 14. Chapter of his Epistle to the Romanes, and the first of the first to the Corinthians, that we are not our owne. It behoueth therefore the faithfull, that they presume not on the libertie, too doe what seemeth them, and to liue euery one after his owne lust. And why so? The Lorde Jesus therefore died and rose againe & reuiued, that he might be Lord both of the quick & dead. It is then good reason, that Jesus Christ shoulde be Lord both of the liuing

Rom. 14. 9.
1. Cor. 6. 19.
Rom. 14. 9.

uing it of the dead, seeing he hath not spared himselfe for our redemption & saluation. And besides this, that the sonne of God hath offered himselfe vpon the crosse to redeeme vs, let vs knowe that at this day by the meanes of the Gospell he maketh vs partakers of this benefite: for hee hath gathered vs to him selfe, to the end wee should be of his flocke and inheritance. It is true that he is that vndefiled Lamb and without spot, which taketh away the sinnes of the world, and that he hath offered him selfe to reconcile man vnto God. Howbeit, so it is, that wee see many people forsaken, to whom the gate is shut, and to whome God hath not shewed this fauour, to inlighten them in the faith, as we are. And withall let vs note, that forasmuch as the Gospell is preached vnto vs, we haue herein a sure testimonie, that the sonne of God will make the redemption which hee hath once accomplished auailable vnto vs, and that he will haue vs to reioyce in such a benefite. Let vs learne then that our vnthankfulnesse shalbe so muche the more vilainous, if wee employ not all our paines to serue that God, which hath by suche benefites bounde vs vnto himselfe. If such as are not of ỳ houshold of faith behaue themselues as vntamed horses broken lose, if they passe all measure in their superstitions, if they be lose and lawlesse in their liuing, this may well be, because they haue no bridle to restraine them, because the Lord raineth them not backe as he doeth his housholde seruantes. Wee see the horrible confusion which is now in the Papasie. But all this while they haue no doctrine to reduce men vnto God, but rather to estraunge them from him. And wee see howe the deuil hath gained an empire and kingdome among them in such sort, that all is ful of deceites & illusions, and that the liuing God is forsaken. See therehere an horrible confusion. But as for vs, seeing God hath drawne vs to himselfe, is not this a most streight obligation, to make vs knit our selues wholy vnto him, to make vs hold the obedience of the doctrine proposed vnto vs in his name? Let vs therfore learne so to cleaue vnto our God, that wee renounce all that wee might forge of our owne braine, that wee stagger no more hither or thither, or bee moued and tossed in any sorte whatsoeuer. Knowe wee that there is one God, which will possesse vs for his people, & so wholie possesse vs, that his power be not taken from him, to be bestowed on creatures: knowe we that he watcheth ouer vs, to the ende wee shoulde acknowledge, that it is he onely whom wee must call vpon, and of whom we must looke for all

helpe and succour. And for that he will receiue vs, and keepe vs in his house, let vs walke as in his presence: so that we worshippe him as our onely God, not onely by way of ceremonies and outward protestation: but sincerely and in heart, as we knowe that his seruice is spirituall. Briefly, let vs yelde vp our selues, our soules, and bodies, to be gouerned by him, that he may be in all thinges honoured and glorified.

Now let vs cast our selues downe before the face of our good God, with acknowledging of our faults, beseeching him that he will make vs feele them better than we haue done, that we may be led to a true and earnest repentaunce, that he will mortifie vs more and more, cutting off our euill and disordered affections, to the end we may be wholie giuen to feare and honour him. And because we cannot serue him so purely as he deserueth, whyles we be yelde bounde vnder the infirmities of our flesh: pray we him that he will beare with vs, vntill he hath clothed vs with his righteousnesse. And so let vs say humbly from our heart, Almightie God and heauenly father.

The 3. Sermon.

Deut. Chap. 5.

8 Thou shalt make thee no grauen image, or any likenes of that that is in heauen aboue, or whiche is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters vnder the earth.

9 Thou shalt neither bowe thy selfe vnto them, nor serue them: for I thy Lorde thy God am a gelous God, visiting the iniquitie of the fathers vpon the children, euen to the third and fourth generation of them that hate me:

10 And shewing mercie to thousandes of them that loue me, and keepe my Commaundements.

Because

Because men are so farre inclined to corrupt the worship of God by wicked superstitions, it behoueth that God feare them by his threates, to the ende they might be as it were forceably kept back: when otherwise they would carry themselues headlong by their vanitie, to imagine of God cleane contrarie to all that which is agreeable with his maiestie. And this is a point worthy to bee noted. For it seemeth (as wee haue alreadie touched) that it was now needlesse to forbid the people of Israel to make any images, after they had knowen the liuing God. But because of our cursed inclination, it was requisite that this so streight a forbidding as wee see, should bee adioyned. And this is done as wel for vs, as for them: because this vice is as it were settled in our bones. If God shewe not, that he will not suffer idolatrie, and that we be not wounded with such threates, there is not one amongst vs which forgeth not an infinite number of idols, and by this meane the honour due to the liuing God is transported vnto our fantasies. Let vs note then, that here we are reproued of hauing a cursed and peruerse nature, which alwaies draweth vs to superstition, and that there is great need that we be held backe after some violent and forceable maner. For of our owne good will we neuer serue God in such sort, as that we imagine nothing of him, but that which is proper to his maiestie. And withal wee may note, to what purpose our good meanings serue vs. For if there bee any thing in which men may excuse themselues with this, that they thinke they do wel, it is when they forge vnto themselues idols. For to what end do they make them, but to serue God, to be stirred vp to a greater deuotion, and to haue a more strong assurance that God will heare them in their requestes. These then are the men which may best pretend this colour of good meaning: but yet we see on the contrarie side, that God hereby is grieuously angred: wee see how hee pronounceth an horrible sentence of condemnatiō vpon all them, which leaue themselues to be gouerned by their thinking and meaning. They will say stil, and the thing is so, That they thinke to serue God: but what? Hee accepteth no such seruice, but rather accurseth it, and

that by good right. For as we haue aboue shewed, his maiestie is disguised, when one will make vnto him a visible ymage. Wee are then instructed in this place to doe nothing as seemeth vs, especially when there is any question of the seruice of God, that we attempt nothing after our owne fantasies, but that wee followe in all simplicitie that which he appointeth by his worde, without adding of any thing vnto it whatsoeuer. For assone as wee shal haue declined neuer so little heerein, what euer we alledge to make our cause good, God will not leaue vs vnpunished. For this is no vaine threate, when hee saieth, That he is a God of gelousie and anger, which visiteth the iniquitie of parents vpon their children. Thus you see then two pointes which we haue to beare in minde in this place. The one is that because we are by nature ouer much giuen to idolatrie, this threatening of God continues alwayes before our eyes, to the end we presume not to mingle any thing with his word, or to deuise any kinde of idolatrie, but that we serue him purely according to his nature, and not according to our fantasie. And let this be for one note. The other is, that wee knowe wee must not pretende our good meanings, to iustifie that which wee shall haue inuented and deuised: but contrary wyse let vs remember, that the principal seruice which God requireth, is obedience. Now let vs come to the words which are set downe in this sentence: God saith in the first place, I am thy euerliuing thy God, or thy mightie and strong one. Here againe, he setteth himselfe against al idols. For we haue alreadie seene, that to reuelle the superstitions of the Israelites, he declared himselfe in his maiestie. Nowe this is to take all excuse from men, when God once manifesteth himselfe vnto them. When we know not which is the true religion, neither can discerne who is the true God, it is no maruel if al our senses wander, & we runne hither & thither without any right directing of our wayes, as poore wanderers: but when God hath once declared himselfe vnto vs, and we knowe his trueth, then is there greate reason that all our deuises fall to the grounde, and that wee abyde stedfast in that, whereof wee haue knowledge. For this cause GOD repeateth this thing, That he hath declared himselfe, to his people, and hath chosen them to himselfe, and that he will gouerne them euen by the lawe which is nowe published. And of purpose nameth hee himselfe a gelous God, and wrathful. For this word importeth both these

things.

thinges. And agayne, although he bee called heere, God, notwithstanding the worde he heere vseth, is derived from a worde which signifieth strength & feare. Nowe when hee nameth himselfe gelous, there is no doubt but he meaneth thereby too signifie, that he will not suffer that his honour bee violated, or that he be robbed of that which properly belongeth vnto him, to haue it geuen to creatures, that hee can not patiently endure any such treacheries. Wherefore when the honor of God shall not be so prized on our part as it deserueth, let vs knowe that he will not neglect it. For we shal feele in the ende that hee forgetteth not himselfe, but will mainteyne his glorie, as he declareth throughout all the holy Scripture. Verily if wee had but one droppe of true vnderstanding, wee woulde be zealous for the honour of our God, so that wee needed not to be stirred vp heereunto: we woulde of our selues endeuour to accomplishe that which is written in the Psalmes, that is, That his zeale shoulde deuoure vs: that we shoulde burne within our selues when we see his maiestie reprochfully abused, it woulde be (I say) that we should then feele within vs a burning and consuming fire. But what? Wee are curious too maintayne our owne honour, and in the meane whyle wee will suffer that the honour of the Lorde bee trampled vnder feete, that men make their sport and game of it, that men haue it in derision and mockerie, or at least that men mangle and teare it in peeces. And therfore when the worlde shall be wholly set on idolatry, when all of vs shall neglect our duetie in the seruice of God, shall not our Lorde, after he hath reproued our lasenesse and vnthankfulnesse in this point, shewe that although we haue beene careleslie herein, he will yet haue such a zeale as behoueth him to maintaine his honour, and that whyle he shall be trode vnder the feete of men, hee will execute on them a sharpe and grieuous reuenge? Nowe to the ende that wee should knowe that beyng gelous in his honours behalfe, he knoweth well in what sorte to punish the idolaters, he taketh to himselfe the name of GOD, which importeth force and strength, as wee haue already touched: and to this end he doeth it, that wee also when we think of him, shoulde ioyne these twoo woordes together. For Moses vnderstandeth in this place, that which is more fully expressed by the Prophete Nahum, when he sayeth, The Lorde is a gelous GOD, a God of vengeances, a God which punisheth them that haue offended, which reserueth wrath for his enemies.

Psal. 69. 9.

Nahum. 1, 2.

a God, which shall come in a whirlewind and tempest. The prophet vseth this word, that God is gelous, that is to say, that he is not forgetfull, that he hath not his eyes closed and shut vp, when men contemne him, but that he marketh it, that all which is done is registred before him, that he will one day take accompt of it. Now after that he hath spoke of this affection, that is to say, that God wil maintein his honour, he sheweth by and by that he hath wherewith too doe it, that he is armed with force and might to punish his enimies, & that they cannot by any meanes escape his hand. And to that end he speaketh of a whirlewind & tempest. See why he speaketh of vengeance. He addeth also further, that though God dissemble for a time, that yet he reserueth wrath for his enemies, and will in a conuenient time make them feele with whom they haue had to doe, and that they haue prouoked the liuing GOD to anger. We se now what Moses vnderstandeth: namely, that God will haue his honour esteemed of vs. And although we think to escape vnpunished, when we haue polluted his seruice, & corrupted it, in what sort soeuer, yet in his time he will shew, that he is not forgetful of himself, but that he will maintein and defend his owne honor. This is one point to be noted.

Moreouer he adioyneth, that he is also mighty enough to put in execution his gelousy. For y Lord is not as mortal men, which can but fume & chafe, when their honor is foiled, & they contemned and iniuried, but they haue not the meane to worke the reuenge they would. God is not such a one: he is armed with might & power to confound all his enimies. Truely wee must not imagine in God any humane affections, such as with which we see men to be moued and carried away. There is neither anger nor wrath in GOD. But because we cannot comprehend him as he is, it behoueth that he apply himself to our rudenesse. So, as often as the Scripture speaketh of wrath, anger, and indignation: this is not that God is changeable, that he resembleth vs, to bee moued as we are with passions. For he alwayes abideth in one estate: yea, there is no shadow of chaunge in him. As Saint Iames vseth the same similitude, to declare, that in his nature & being there is no chaunge. But because we comprehend not the iudgements of God, but by these words, of anger, wrath and indignation: for this cause the Scripture speaketh after this manner. Now let vs note principally in this place, That it is a fearefull

Iam. 1. 17.

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seareful and horrible thing, as God héere declareth, to fall into his handes: and aboue al, when wée shall haue peruerted the puritie of his seruice by our wicked inuentions, rashly attempting that which our braine hath fondly conceiued. Let vs therefore knowe wée shal feele with whome we haue had to deale, and that he is a greater maister, than with whom we might thinke to dally after such a fashion. Now withall, God is not héere contented to threaten them which by ydolatrie are turned away from his lawe, in saying only that he wil punish them in their owne persons, but he extendeth his vengeance to their whole posteritie. I am (saith he) a gelous God, which punish the iniquitie of the fathers vpon the children, vnto the third & fourth generation. It séemeth at the first sight, that this is euil agréeing to the iustice of God, to punish the childrē for the sinnes of the fathers & mothers. And beside that, natural reason is against it. Wée see what is spoken concerning this point, to the Prophet Ezechiel: namely, That he which shal haue sinned, shal beare his own paiment, and that the sonne shal not beare the iniquitie of the father, nor the father the iniquitie of the sonne. Loe then, this place héere might séeme somewhat too austere and rigorous, which shoulde séeme to derogate from the righteousnesse of God: for sinne, bringeth his hyre, that is, the death of him which committeth it. Hée then which is innocent, why shal hée die? And albeit this reason were not sufficient, we haue the testimonie of the holy scripture, where God declareth, that hée will not punish the innocent children for the sinnes of their fathers. For he reproueth the Iewes for this blasphemie which ranne much in their mouth, and whereof they had nowe made a common prouerbe: Our fathers haue eaten sowre grapes, and our téeth are set on edge. Wée are not thus rigorously handled for the faultes wée haue committed, for wée haue liued as behoued vs, but hée grateth héere vpon the sinne of our fathers. Thus the Iewes murmured against God.

Heb. 10. 31.

Rom. 6. 23.

Eze. 18. 2.

Now he sweareth that this blasphemie shal no more reigne among them. But for al this, when al shal be wel considered, there is no contrarietie in these places. For in the place of Ezechiel god vnderstandeth no other thing, but that those which are punished of him, cannot alledge their innocencie, that they cannot say that God doeth thē any wrong or iniury, if he vse thē sharply: for they shal find thēselues

guiltie euery one in his owne person, and that he shal bee declared iust, when euery one shal see that hée exceedeth neither measure nor reason.

Nowe this is also certaine, that when God punisheth the children, because of the fathers: yet ceaseth he not to bee iust in his chastizementes: for the childrẽ on their part being well examined, shall bee founde faultie. I say yet further, that they can no sooner come foorth of the wombe of their mother, but they commit many notable and manifest sinnes, and such as might bee knowen to the whole worlde. For what offspring are wee? What bring wee forth by nature, but sinne and wickednesse? See then the infantes which are alreadie sinners, yea, béeing in the wombe of their mother, they are condemned before God, there is yet no euill perfetued in them, howbeit their nature is altogither corrupt and sinfull. They haue a seede of wickednesse in them, & because of this original sinne which is descended from Adam vpon al mankind, behold they are already vnder condemnation. Now seeing it is so, that the litle infantes are not exempted from the anger & malediction of God, it is certaine when hée punisheth them, this shal not bée without good cause: but we shal alwaies know, that he proceedeth herein in al equitie and iustice, as an vpright iudge: by greater reason they which are elder & further stryken in yéeres, are punished as not innocent, for one shall finde them by many degrées more faultie. And so as concerning the place of Ezechiel the case is cléere, that God punisheth not the innocent children for the transgression of their fathers, for the faults shalbe also founde in themselues. As for this, when he saith, That he punisheth the iniquitie of fathers vpon the children, let vs consider how this is done, and then this hard knot shal be easily vntyed.

First then let vs knowe, that God oweth vs nothing, and that if he bestowe any benefite vppon vs, this is altogether of his méere liberalitie, not that he is any thing beholding vnto vs. In the meane whyle, if hée will vse his rigour towardes vs, he may leaue vs in condemnation as wée are. Let God onely withdraw his mercie, and shewe himselfe iudge ouer the whole Worlde, and what shall become of vs? Surely wée shall all perishe, there is no remedie: little and greate, fathers and children, without exception (I say) wée are all condemned, if GOD draw vs not

out

out of the curse in whiche wée are, and that by his frée mercie, without the least occasion of beeing bounde vnto vs. Do nowe, seeing GOD may bring vs all to destruction, if it please him to vse his gentlenesse and clemencie towardes some, if hée call them to him selfe, if hée deliuer them from this déepe dungeon of damnation, in which they are: may any one accuse him for this? May any one reprooue him herein, the least that may bée? No. For our eye must not be euill, if hée of his gentlenesse taketh pitie and compassion of his creatures.

And although hée vse not the like measure towardes all, yet notwithstanding wée must haue our mouth closed vp: or rather eyes open, not to murmure, but to confesse that al which he doth, is in equitie and iustice, although it surmount our sense and reason. For wée comprehende not alwayes the reason why GOD disposeth so of men, and yet must wée laye aside our prating, and learne to reuerence and adore God in his iudgementes, when they shall bée ouer high for vs, ouer wonderfull, ouer secrete. Howe euer it bée, let this generall rule abide certeine, that is to say, That God might leaue vs in our destruction, wherein wée are, if so it pleased him, and that by this meanes the whole worlde shoulde perishe: but because it pleaseth him to shewe him selfe gentle and pitifull, not towardes all, but towardes a parte, see what discerneth the one from the other.

Nowe, herevppon hée leaueth them, as it séemeth good vnto him, in the curse wherein they are borne. And if one demaunde why God vseth his mercie towardes some, when on others he executeth his seueritie? It is certeine, the first and principall cause is vnknowne vnto vs, neither ought wée to enquire after it. And why? For it behoueth that all our senses bée locked vp captiues in that behalfe, and that wée confesse that God hath libertie to chuse whome hée pleaseth, and to refuse the rest. But howsoeuer the case standeth, hée maketh this promise to the faithfull, that hée wil take pitie on their children, and that as hée hath begunne his mercie in their persons, so hée will continue it in their posteritie, euen to a thousande generations. Séeing God hath made this promise to his seruauntes, wée see nowe there is some cause why God hath pitie of the one, rather than of the other.

Againe on the contrarie part, hée threatneth the vnfaithfull that hée will curse them, not onely in themselues, but also in their issue, and in them which shall descende from their stocke and familie. But nowe let vs come to the mercie which God sheweth, and to the punishmentes he executeth. His mercie then is not in this, that hée blesseth the children of the faithfull with riches, with health, or other like thinges: or that hée maketh them to prosper to the worldward: those are not the chiefe blessinges of God, that is not the ende whereat he beginneth, but rather he sheweth them his goodnesse and mercie, when hée gouerneth them by his holie spirite, when hee giueth them the marke and seale of the adoption of his children, when hée correcteth them, and purgeth them from their sinnes, to reforme and renewe them to his image and likenesse. Yée sée then the mercie which God extendeth to the children of the faithfull, that is to say, he suffereth them not to remaine in their corruption and wickednesse, but that he reformeth them and gouerneth them by his holie spirite. This being done, he continueth his mercie further more and more, and maketh them to prosper euen in this world, vntil the fulnesse of his mercie be heaped vpon them: namely, vntill hée hath drawne them out of this worlde into his kingdome, and giueth them there the fruition of euerlasting life. On the contrarie side, whereas he punisheth the iniquitie of fathers vpon the children, this is as much to say, as that hée will leaue the stocke of them in the same plight, they are in. There is a wicked man, there is a despiser of God, there is an hypocrite, there is an vnfaithfull and vnbeléeuing man: well he shal haue children: God will, as wée may sée, forget them, and account them for straungers. And whereas he acknowledgeth them not in the number of his owne, he daineth not nor vouchsafeth to shew himself a father towardes them. So he leaueth them as forsaken, and then it must néedes be that Satan possesse them, & being destitute of the spirit of God, what other thing may happen vnto them than euil and mischiefe, so as they procure to themselues the wrath and anger of God more and more? Nowe then doth our Lorde punish them without good cause? Can they say they are innocent and guiltlesse? No. For there is sufficient fault in them before hande. Wée sée then a great deale the better howe this which God hath pronounced by Ezechiel is true: namely, that hée which hath sinned shall beare the payment and punishment as he hath deserued, and that the innocent

shall

shall not bée punished for the cause of the sinner and transgressour. Notwithstanding, wée sée also, that not without cause hée declareth, that hée will punish the iniquitie of fathers vppon the children. For why? It is in him to shewe mercie to the children of the wicked and vnbeléeuing, or of the contemners of his word, or of hypocrites, which abuse his name: it is (I say) in the choice and libertie of God, to withdrawe his grace from their posteritie. And when their children are estraunged from God, what reteine they but the filth and corruption of Adam? There is nothing else in them, but sinne and wickednesse. And therefore néedes it must be, that they bée enimies to God. Wée sée then howe he punisheth them in iustice, and that they can not shift them selues out of his hand, in saying that he doeth them wrong, that he is ouer cruell towardes them. It behoueth that euerie mouth bée stopped in that behalfe. True it is, that a man can neuer satisfie and content the rebellious, as wée sée there are many which aduaunce them selues against God in this case, with suche boldnesse and presumption, that good men which are sober and modest, are ashamed to behold them, but leaue we these dogges to barke their fill, and in the meane time let vs glorifie our God in all humilitie, knowing at least wise this one thing, that he hath this authoritie, and might, to shewe fauour and mercie to whom it pleaseth him. And for this cause we must conclude, that if God withdrawe his spirite from the posteritie of the wicked, hée may not be accused of cruelties. For they are in them selues punishable, when they are in this sorte forsaken of him, and are not gouerned by his holie spirite. Let vs then note well that this sentence hath no contrarietie to that of Ezechiel. Nowe let vs returne to sée the meaning of Moses in these wordes. There is no doubt, but by his manner of speaking in this place, hée woulde imprinte a greater feare in vs, than if barely and simplie he had saide: God will punishe you, when you shal haue corrupted his seruice, when you shall haue chaunged any thing in religion, when you shall haue deuised and fashioned any image or likenesse of him, thinke not that you shall escape his vengeance: for he will not suffer that his honour be defaced, and brought to nothing in suche sorte. If Moses had thus spoken, men as ouerhardned and voide of nature, would not haue bene sufficiently moued with feare. Therefore he héere passeth further: God (saieth he) will not onely punishe you in your owne persons, but hee will extende his vengeaunce vp-

pon your offpring, and not onely on your children, but he wil purſue it euen to the further ende of your linage, in ſuch ſort that you ſhall for euer feele his wrath, as a kindling fire, and after your death, men ſhall beholde the ſignes and markes of your iniquitie: GOD ſhall place you in ſuch ignominie and reproche, that you ſhalbe as ſpectacles to the worlde: and although you be rotten & putrified vnder the earth, yet ſhall his vengeaunce purſue you ſo, that your ſinnes ſhall bee grated on, and called to remembraunce from age to age: and men ſhall knowe that you haue rebelled againſt him, whiche ſhewed you ſo many of his benefites, that at leaſt you ſhoulde haue beene as the ſheepe of his flocke, to bee gouerned by him and his worde. Nowe then let vs take heede, wee be not ouer ſluggiſh and paſt ſenſe, when God in this manner ſtirreth vp and awaketh vs. Truely if onely in one worde, or by ſome exteriour ſignification hee ſhoulde ſignifie his anger, wee ought to bee touched with great feare: but ſince wee are dull vppon the ſpurre, yet at leaſt then, when God declareth that after hee hath punished vs, hee will yet followe on his vengeaunce vppon our poſteritie, and that after our death it muſt needes bee, that thoſe which ſhalbe begotten of vs bee condemned: when (I ſay) God ſpeaketh in this wiſe, let vs then bee more attentiue to walke in his feare, and to turne our ſelues vnto him, that we prouoke him not to anger, being as it is ſo fearefull and terrible. Thus we ſee in what ſorte we are to make our profit by this texte. Nowe he addeth further, Of them which hate him: in which word he comprehendeth all the tranſgreſſours of the law. If then one demand whether all thoſe, whiche turne them ſelues from the obedience of God, hateth him therefore: This place here anſwereth, Yea: not that it ſeemeth ſo to them, and yet the truth is ſo. And we ought here not to reſt vppon our owne iudgement, for God onely is a competent Iudge to pronounce ſentence herein. And becauſe that men, when they giue them ſelues ouer to worke wickedlie, will not ſay, neither thinke ſo in heart, that they hate God, it behoueth that this vice ſhould be diſcouered. It is true that hypocrites will make a faire ſhewe, that the loue of God cauſeth them to ſhew ſome good countenaunce. And in deede it may haue ſome ſmall ſeede, but it is a baſtard and vicious ſeede. So then this hatred is not apparant in hypocrites, neither in many other which lead a diſordered & diſſolute life: but yet is it in them, though we knowe it not, for as all malefactours & licen-

tious liuers woulde there were neither iudge, nor order, nor policie in the worlde: so all they which willingly & of their owne accord would not acknowledge themselues Gods subiects, they spite him, & couldo be contented he were plucked out of heauen. This appeareth sufficiently in them, which are wholy giuen ouer & peruerted. When men haue losed the bridle to al iniquitie, they cannot beare any correctiõ, and are so farre from being tractable to be taught, when they are threatened, they grind the teeth, they storme & rage, they are furious, and mad against God. This hating then of God is manifest ynough in them which haue granted themselues a more outragious libertie of doing ill, in thé which are caried away as with a tempest in their wickednesse, & are fully settled in their sinnes. In others which haue yet some feare, & are in some sorte moued, when we speake of God, & of his iudgements, this appeareth not, & yet there is already in them an hatred of God. Truely they thinke it not, but God séeth much more cleare than wée, and when thinges are hid and vnknowen vnto vs, he noteth them. We must alwayes beare in minde, howe Saint John saith, That God is much greater than our consciences: that is to say, That if our consciences beare vs witnesse of our faultes, God shal not sléepe in the meane tyme. And so let vs briefly remember, that al they which conforme not themselues to the obedience of God, and which humble not themselues vnder his maiestie, to serue and honor him, that al they hate him, although by effect they shewe it not at first, & that men can not iudge so of them. And for the same cause wesée why in like maner, when God speaketh of them, which kéepe his commandements, he beginneth with his loue. He saith, That he wil shewe mercy on thousand generations to them which loue him. And why? For it is not possible to desire to honor God, and to be his subiects, if we haue not a féeling of this loue, wherof he here speketh. And this may serue vs for a good lesson, as we shal sée hereafter, that Moses when he woulde giue a short abridgement of the Law, saith, What doeth the Lorde thy God Israel require of thée, but that thou loue him with thy whole hart, and that thou cleaue to him? We shal neuer (I say) know, what it is to yéeld obedience to Gods lawe, and to rule our selues according to it, if wée begynne not at this loue. And why? For God requireth a willing seruice, he wil not that wée serue him with a seruile feare, but his desire is that we come vnto his worship with a frée & cheerfull courage, & take euen a pleasure in obeying

1. *Iohn.* 3. 20.

Deut. 10. 12.

and

& honoring of him. Now this cannot be except we loue him. Wherefore let vs note, that the beginning, the fountaine, the fundation and roote of obedience is this loue of God, so as wee bee not forced to come vnto him, but euē take a singular delight and pleasure therin, knowing that this is our true happinesse that wee desire nothing else, but to bee ruled by his will, and to bee in all pointes conformable to the same. And moreouer let vs note, that this loue cannot bee in vs before wee haue tasted of the goodnesse of our God. For as long as wee conceiue God our aduersarie and contrarie partie, wee can not, but flee him. Will we then loue him? Will wee bee reformed to his obedience to take a pleasure in his seruice? Wee must first know, that hee is our father and sauiour, and that he desireth nothing more than to shew himselfe louing, & fauorable towards vs. When we shall so haue tasted the great loue he beareth vs, then shal wee bee stirred vp to loue him as our father, and when this loue shalbee in vs, there is no doubt, but wee shal obay him, and his law shall beare rule in our thoughtes, and in our affections, and in al our members. For what is the cause that we are so rebellious against God, but that we hate him, as wee haue before saide? Againe, on the contrarie side, the loue of God shal leade vs to serue him, and to set our selues, & our doings in order according to his iustice, in such sorte, that a man shal see a certaine conformitie & melodie betweene the law of God, & al our desires & affections. But yet the better to vnderstande this, let vs consider what God is, for hee will not bee knowen according to our nature: and when we shal heare him speake, it is not ynough to yelde him this title of God, but hee will bee knowen as hee is: namely, iust, and good, that he is the fountaine and perfection of al wisedome, of al power, of al vprightnesse, of all equitie and iustice. Now then let vs conceiue God as hee is, that is, with his iustice, and vprightnesse, and equitie: and then shal wee not desire but to frame & fashion our selues vnto him: contrariewise, when wee shal loue that which is euil, and shalbe wrapped in wickednesse as in a garment, it cannot be, but we must hate him. And why? Because here is no question of some bare nature & being, neither ought we to imagine God as an ydol, but we must comprehend him in his iustice. If then wee shal hate this which is in God, that is to say, his iustice and vprightnesse, it must needs be that we hate him also. For he cannot deny himself, he cannot be disguised, he cānot be transfigured after our fansie.

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he alwayes abideth like him selfe. So then, as I haue alreadie touched, al they which loue God, they faile not to be obedient to his law, they cease not to obserue and keepe his commaundementes, for these thinges are knit together, and are inseparable. And this we haue to beare in minde vpon this place. Nowe hereby hence wee are to take a warning, that we haue in greater horror, than we are wont to haue, all rebellion, all sinne, and offences. For it is no small thing to be proclaimed the enimies of God, and to make open warre with him. Now, it is so, that wee cannot turne our selues from him, nor cast off his yoke, but wee shalbe conuicted to haue beene his enemies, and to haue waged open battell with him. And loe, is not this an execrable thing? Let vs therefore learne to haue our sinnes and offences in horrour and detestation, forasmuch as by them, wee are accused to be the enemies of God, and that he also must shew him selfe our aduersaries partie. Withall we are also warned to come vnto God with a pure and sincere affection. For it is not enough to withhold our feete, and our handes, and our eyes from euill doing, but it behoueth that our heart goe before, and that God be serued of vs with a true meaning minde and vpright affection: and this affection must not be forced and constrained, but it ought to proceede from a free loue of God. Therefore, when wee will rightly obserue his lawe, wee must first know, that God is vnto vs a kinde hearted father, gentle and fauourable vnto vs, to the ende we may be led to yeld vnto him like loue & affection. And withal, let vs not think to mocke & deceiue our selues, in protesting that wee loue God, if in the meane while this be not shewed in the whole course of our life. For when here is mention made of the loue of God, Moses adoeth, that they which loue him, doe also keepe his commaundementes. It behoueth then that our life be answerable in this behalfe, and that it beare witnesse whether we loue God, or whether wee hate him. For the rest which followeth, it is not without cause that God making comparison of his wrath and vengeaunce, with his fauour and mercie, saith, That he will punishe them that hate him to the thirde and fourth generation, and that hee will shewe mercie to them that loue him in a thousand generations. For by this he declareth that, which is better and more fully expressed in other sentences of the scriptures that is, That he is slow to anger, greatly inclined to compassion and pitie, that hee is patient & of long suffering, that his anger endureth but a while, that his mer- *Psal. 103. 8* *Psa. 30. 5.*

cie is to life, & endureth for ever. Ye see then the true nature of God, that is, that he desireth nothing more, than to draw men vnto him by all lenitie and gentlenesse, and to vse his mercie and goodnesse towardes them. When he punisheth them this is as it were against his nature. Not, but that it is agreeable to God, aswell to punish, as to shewe mercie: but hee will shewe vs, that his goodnesse is much more greater: and briefely, that hee is not sharpe and rigorous, but desirous to lay open his hart towards vs, if we would suffer him, for in verie deede he will bee knowne gratious and pitifull. And this is that wherein his principal glorie shineth. Therefore let vs note wel, that not for naught Moses here assigneth a thousand generations to the mercy of God, and restraineth his wrath & vengeance to three or foure generations. As if he did say: It is very true that our Lord will not leaue superstition vnpunished, when you shall haue peruerted his seruice, and defaced his honour, busying your selues in your own dreames, and vaine fantsies: you shal surely feele the punishment, and your children after you shall feele it: and when the fire of his wrath and indignation shal be kindled among you, it shall not bee so soone quenched as you thinke: but yet for all that, God will not cease to bee pitifull, and his mercie shalbe alwayes greater than his anger. And in verie deede, as God by the threat we haue here heard, would reteine the worlde in true religion, to the ende it should make no idols nor puppittes to counterfeit him, so he would by his promise heere conteined, as it were allure vs to beare him the loue and reuerence which we owe vnto him, and he desireth rather to winne vs by his gentlenesse, than to restraine vs by his threateninges. See how then in what sorte hee speaketh: My children, thinke not that I wil deale roughly with you: it is true, if you prouoke mee, I shal not suffer that men make a sport and game of mee, but when I haue declared mine anger, I desire yet rather to traine you, and winne you to my selfe by mercie and gentlenesse. I protest then, and declare vnto you, if you abide wholy and sincerely in my obedience, I will continue to bestowe my benefites vpon you, euen to a thousand generations: so that your children, after your death, shall finde mee the same I haue beene to you. Beholde what wee haue to beare in minde vpon this place.

And moreouer, for conclusion, let vs note, that it is not without great cause, that God placeth here this worde of Mercie, although it

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he as a reward of the seruice which is done him. He might well haue saide, I will consider the seruice of them which shall haue honoured and worshipped mee, which shall haue loued mee in obseruing my lawe, I will shewe them that it is no lost labour to haue serued and honoured me, as they shal haue done. God might haue spoken so. But he saith, I will shewe mercie. And how so? Seemeth it not, that if wee serue God, as he hath appointed, he owety vs a recompense? Howe he declareth that he wil bestowe a benefite vppon them which haue honoures him, and obserued his commandements, and that this is not by any obligation of due debte, or because of their merites and desertes: so, he vseth herein mercie. So this worde of Mercie, is to beate downe all pryde of men in such sorte, that they may not boast of their workes, as if they were worthy of reward and payment: but rather knowe, that God ment to declare by this, that when we serue him the best that we can, wee haue alwayes néede to be borne withal of him, and that he pardoneth vs our vices and our infirmities.

Thus are there two things which we haue to note in this place. The one is, that although we should serue God in all purenes, if he recompense vs, it is not of any duetie he owety vnto vs. For in deede, from whence commeth this, that wee haue serued him, but from his mere and only grace? And what then may he owe vs? The other is, that we shal be al founde guiltie, when it shal please him to examine vs according to the exact measure of his iustice. So then, in that God recompenseth vs, when wee haue serued him, he vseth this for his mercy and goodnesse, and not that he is bounde vnto vs: nay, which more is, he must forgiue vs our sinnes, and beare with vs, euen in that which wee do well. Knowe wee therefore, that GOD sheweth himselfe gentle and liberall towardes vs, in that it pleaseth him to beare with our infirmities, making vs to taste his mercie, where he might of right make vs taste his rigour. For let vs not thinke, but without this mercy wee should all perishe: yea, though we shoulde enforce our selues to obay him, wee shoulde notwithstanding be alwayes founde faultie, were it not that he would vse this mercy towards vs, of which he here speaketh. So then this is that whither vnto we must flee for refuge, if wee will be assured of our saluation. 1. Cor. 15. 10.

Nowe let vs cast our selues downe, before the face of our good God, with acknowledging of our faultes, praying him that he will make vs feele them better than we haue done, to the end he may lead vs to a true repentance, and that being taught to feare him, we tremble and stand in such awe of him assone as he shal threaten vs with his anger, wee may conceiue the force thereof, that being humbled therwith, we run to his fatherly goodnes, not doubting but that if he hath once begunne to shewe himselfe our father and Sauiour, he will continew it euē after our death, if so be we withdraw not our selues from him by our wickednesse and rebellion. That it will please him to graunt this grace not onely to vs, but to all peoples and nations of the earth, &c.

The 4. Sermon.

Deut. Chap. 5.

¶ Thou shalt not take the name of the Lorde thy God in vaine: for the Lord wil not hold him guiltles which shal take his name in vaine.

IF we were but wel aduised, there were no neede that men shoulde teache vs to beare reuerence vnto God. For nature ought to leade vs hereunto. For to what end are we created? And why liue we in this worlde, but to doe homage to him, to whome we be beholden for all good giftes, and to apply our selues to honour and glorifie his maiestie? Behold the whole end and summe of this life. But for al this in stede of honouring our God, and applying our whole studies and endeuours hereunto it seemeth that we haue conspired the cleane contrarie. For some would haue the remembrāce of God buried: others despise and mocke him, others with ful throate and open mouth blaspheme him, so that we sufficiently declare, that we know not why we liue or should haue our being. Nowe because there is such a vice in vs, God, to remedie it sheweth that wee ought likewise to abstaine from abusing his holy name, for this is as it were

were to vnhallowe it, and therfore he hath forbidden that his name
bee not taken in vaine. By these wordes we ought diligently to con-
sider, what is the right and lawful vse of his name. True it is that
we are not worthy to take in our mouth ye name of the Lord, in what
sort soeuer it be, for we must consider of that which Esay speaketh in
the 6. Chap. Lord I am a man of polluted lips, & I dwel in the midst
of a people, which is altogither filthy and defiled. Seeing then wee
haue such filthinesse and vncleannesse in vs, it is certaine we cannot
take the name of God in our mouth, were it not that God of his good-
nesse would that we vse his name, so it be to glorifie him withal. Let
vs then note wel, that when it is said, That we take not the name of
God in vaine, that the Lord reproueth vs of vnthankfulnesse, if wee
vse not his name, as he hath permitted vs, and folowe not herein the
rule which is contained in his word. For this is the laweful meane,
by which we may vse his name. But to the end that this be yet more
clearly vnderstood, we must marke, that God vnder one kind would
here shewde, what maiestie there is in his name, to the end we speak
not of it, but with al feare and reuerence. Therefore aboue all other
kindes of profaning his name, hee taketh the especiall forme of an
oth, when any question is of swearing. We see how our Lord loueth
vs, in that he lendeth vs his name, to the end we might communicate
with our neighbours, & if there were any controuersie and dissention
among vs, it might be ended by this meane: namely, that if wee bee
not beleued, if any matter were in doubt, the name of God should be
brought forth as Vmpier in the matter to ende the controuersie, so
as the thing shoulde bee altogither certaine, when it shal haue such a
confirmation. Is not this an inestimable goodnesse, that our Lord a-
baseth himselfe so much, as to permitte vs to vse his name? And
why? For it is certaine that the maiestie of God is so precious, that
it ought not to bee abased so farre: but yet hee vouchsafeth to apply
himselfe vnto vs. So much greater then is our villanie & wickednes,
if wee vnhallowe the name of God in our othes. Nowe this is done,
not onely when we are forsworne, but if we take the name of God,
in our mouthes rashly and at random: when wee haue not a regarde
to speake thereof in al wisedom and discretion, and consider whether
the thing which is in controuersie deserueth to bee confirmed in such
manner or no. For if wee vse it rashly and foolishly, beholde the name
of the Lord is as it were vnhallowed. It is true that God accounteth

Esay. 6. 5.

it for one kinde of his seruice, when men sweare by his name, not that he is herein bound vnto vs, but altogether the contrarie. For (as I haue already touched) wee ought to perceiue in this thing, howe GOD beareth with vs, when he licenceth vs to vse his name. But yet doe wee in swearing confesse that GOD hath all preeminence and superioritie ouer vs. He which is inferiour, sweareth by him which is his soueraigne & greater, saieth the Apostle to the Hebrewes. And if we knewe to what end an oth serueth, wee shall vnderstand, that this can not agree, but onely to the maiestie of God. For by it our meaning is to confirme those thinges which are secrete and can haue no other proofe among men. Nowe this can not bee done by any creature, but herein GOD must shewe himselfe, for it is he which soundeth the deapth of mens heartes, and heereuppon also not without cause he challengeth to himselfe the title of trueth. Wee see then that in swearing we doe homage vnto God, protesting that he is our Iudge, and that it is he vnto whome we ought to haue recourse for things which are doubtful and hidden, because it is his office to bring them vnto light, and because hee will maintaine the truthe: for that it appertaineth to his honour and glorie. That is the cause, why GOD reputeth it for one forme of his seruice, when one sweareth by his name: so that it bee not in superfluous and vnnecessarie othes. By this we perceiue, that the fault of them which forsweare themselues, or sweare at random, is so much the more grieuous. For this is as it were to violate the seruice of GOD, and as much as lyeth in vs to bring it to nothing. As for them which periure themselues, they bee not only culpable of taking the name of God in vaine, and of falsly abusing it, but they are rebels and traitors to the maiestie of God. For knowe we howe to worke any greater outrage against God, than to abolish his truth? No. For there is nothing more belonging vnto him. So this is as much as if we woulde plucke him out of his throne, and vtterly bereaue him of all diuine honour and glorie: for this is done, when his truth is turned into a lye.

Whosoeuer therefore forsweareth himselfe, that is to say, whosoeuer taketh the name of GOD in an euil conscience, to colour false things, to cloke and disguise an vntruth, to the end he might beguile and deceiue others: let him knowe it for certaintie, that hee blasphemeth God in so doing. Now purposely I say, to disguise an vntruth.

Heb. 6. 16.

vntruth. For many dispense wt them selues, because before men they can not bee conuicted of periurie. And why? They turne the best side of the coate, they painte and trimme their matters so well, that it shall seeme verie well to men they speake the truth, & are not periured: but GOD alloweth not any suche subtilties. Let vs not then thinke to bee acquited and absolued before him, when we shall haue vsed suche policies, such shiftes, and slye practises. And so in summe wee see, that all they which take the name of GOD otherwise than in trueth and in simplicitie, blaspheme him. Marke this for one pointe. Nowe as for them, which sweare rashlie and without cause, they declare sufficientlie, that they make no other account, than to sporte them selues with GOD. It is true they protest the contrarie, they will still say their meaning is not suche, but this is but hypocrisie. For the effect sufficientlie proueth, that they beare no reuerence vnto God. If a mortall man be held dears of vs, we take not his name in vaine, we will not that any make a scorne of him, and floute him, and when a matter of plaie and mockerie is proposed, wee can not suffer that hee be brought in as on the sotage, for we take this to be to his infamie and discredite. And will wee haue a greater priuiledge than the liuing GOD? We are vile carions, and rottennesse it selfe, and yet will wee bee had in honour and estimation? And shall our God in the meane time be placed beneathe as our vnderling? And thus we see, that there are at this day verie fewe of any religion in the worlde: although many make a shewe and countenaunce of being Christians, that yet notwithstanding neuer knewe, what it is to worship God, to doe him homage, or to yeelde him the seruice which apperteineth vnto him. For howe is this, that the name of God runneth in euerie mans mouth? Oue can not bargaine for the worth of one farthing, withdut hee hath some othe at the ende of euerie woorde. If the honour of God were of price among vs, it is certeine, wee woulde absteine from suche superfluitie of othes: which more is, it woulde breede an horrour in vs. But nowe a dayes euerie one maketh a game of it, and when a man is reprehended for swearing, he will thinke he hath great wrong done him.

Nowe, if one shoulde mainteine any matter whiche were not for his profite, hee woulde bee much grieued therewith: yea, hee woulde make his complaintes thereof: but if wee

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haue the zeale of God to be grieued, when his name shalbe throwne to the grounde, see what quarels are made with vs, see on what spite men are set, howe they grind their teeth at it. Now when the world is come into such a possession of contemning God, and men haue hardened them selues herein, is not this a signe that his maiestie is not knowne nor regarded? And albeit, men yeelde vnto them selues such an outragious libertie vnder this shadowe, that the thing is accustomably vsed, and that of custome is made a lawe: yet will God in the ende shewe, that his name is more deere vnto him than men haue had it, and though we sell it good cheape, it shall cost vs deare, and with an ouer vantage: and it shal be in the ende that the lande wherin we haue bene conuersant, which hath bene defiled, and made vncleane by vs, bee raised vp in iudgement against vs. In like manner all the benefites which wee haue receiued, and which God with a liberall hande hath bestowed on vs, shall come into account for our condemnation, forasmuch as wee haue not knowne him, which hath bene the authour of them, to honor him as he deserueth. Yee see then what wee haue first to obserue and note in this place: namelie, that God beareth graciously with vs, and vseth so great gentlenesse towardes vs, as that he is willing and content wee vse his name in thinges lawfull and right: by which leaue of his wee may sufficiently knowe, that hee is more than a father vnto vs. But withal he warneth vs, to take so much the more diligent heede wee absteine from all wicked othes. For as for periuries (as we haue saide) this is a villainous outrage which wee doe to God. For in asmuche as his trueth is conuerted into a lie: we are falsifiers therof as much as in vs lieth. Yee see then a mortall and deadlie offence. But this is not enough to keepe our selues from forswearing, but our othes also must be sober, and the name of God must not be tossed vp & down among vs as a Tennise ball: but it behoueth, that there be some great necessitie which may hold vs excused, when we make mention of it. Nowe forasmuch as we protest in our othes, that God hath all superioritie ouer vs, by this we may vnderstand, that al the othes which are made by creatures are wicked and intollerable, as proceeding from superstition: as among the Papistes, one will sweare by Saint Anthonie, an other by Saint John, which is asmuch as if one would make idols of them. And why? For wee must alwayes return backe to that sentence which I haue before alledged of the Apostle, that

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we declare God to be our superiour: yea, our soueraigne, when we sweare by his name. And this is the cause why, when God listeneth, to confirme vs in his promises, & happily to abbaish vs when he seeth vs hardened in our sinnes, and that we stand not in awe of his iudgements, he sweareth by himselfe, he referreth to himselfe this honour, whereof it shalbe further handled in the ninth Chapter of this booke. And to they which sweare by creatures, are idolaters. Now for this purpose also, when there is mention made of superstitions, the othes of men are put in as witnesses to condemne them, that they haue turned themselues from the puritie of the lawe. The Pastours, saieth Jeremie, which haue charge to conduct and leade the people, must teach them to sweare by the name of God, that is, that all other othes be laid aside, and that creatures be not mingled, and brought in, when any thing by othe is to be confirmed. Moreouer, when it is here spoken of the name of God, let vs note, that we are not onely forbidden to pronounce this worde, but that the substance thereof is here considered: for God regardeth the hande. As there are some which sweare not expressly by the name of God, and yet notwithstanding they cease not to offende & transgresse against this commandement. For we must alwayes haue regard to come to this which our Lord Jesus Christ handleth in the vi. Chapter of S. Matthew. When you sweare by heauen, is not this the throne of the liuing God? If you sweare by his temple, is not this the place where his maiestie abideth? If then we thinke we shall not be accused and condemned, when we expresse not the name of God in our othes, we greatly abuse our selues. Let vs not therefore thinke to deceiue him in this, for the excuse is altogether foolishe and childishe. And why? The heauen beareth it not a mark and token of the maiestie of God? we then how his glory is diminished. As much is to be saide of the earth, for it is his footestoole, as Christe toucheth in that place which I haue alleadged. Therefore, so let vs briefly learne, that we ought to beare such a reuerence to the name of God, that all othes be layed aside and banished from among vs, but as necessitie requireth, when God suffereth vs to borrow his name. Otherwise let vs follow this forme of speach, as handeling our matters in all simplicitie, to say, Yea, it is so: And let vs knowe, that all which is beside this, is euill & condemned by the lawe: namely, if we take the name of God in vaine. And herewith let vs note, that all superstitious othes,

Deut. 6. 13.

Iere. 12. 16.

Mat. 5. 34

Mat. 5. 37.

and those in which the name of God is not honoured as it deserueth, haue in them a double euill. For first, when men let them flie so at all aduentures, it is a signe they scarse make any account what they say: Secondly, consider wee from whence this common swearing proceedeth, and wee shall finde that from none other thing, but that men be such lyers, so full of falshood and deceite, that when they speake the one to the other, none can beleeue that it is true which is saide. So then, it must needes bee, that there is in vs great wickednesse, considering that when God hath giuen vs a tongue, it is in part to communicate one with an other: For our tongue is the messenger of our heart, whereby wee expresse vnto others what wee haue in our mindes conceiued. Wee may then conclude, that superfluous othes proceede from the disloyaltie and rebellion of men, neither neede wee to make much enquirie, or vse any long processe in this matter: for euery one hath his owne witnesse. Howe euer it bee, let vs learne to vse in this thing such sobrietie as God commandeth, and let vs not sweare without great necessitie, and being thereunto required. But to go on somwhat further in this matter, that all may bee easily vnderstoode: there are some, who thinke that when they sweare by their faith, it is as if they swore not at all. It is true in deede, that the most part sweare nothing, for they haue no more faith then dogges, they haue no conscience nor religion. But yet this name of faith, ceaseth not therefore to be in price before God. For he holdeth it deare, and it is as an hallowed thing vnto him, which neither can, neither ought to bee vnhallowed: except wee will bee in great faulte, and incurre the danger of the threate here made, as wee see. So is it not sufficient not to haue pronounced expressly by God, but when one sweareth by his faith, or taketh any confirmation from that which hath any signe of the maiestie of God, his name is vnhallowed in this thing. What shal we say then of them which vse false othes to disguise their purposes, which sweare rashly, euen to sport them selues with othes: yea, to despite God by their execrable blasphemies, insomuche that hee hath neither flesh nor blood, nor nothing els which they spare? Are these onely holden faultie for abusing the name of God? No, but because they vse him to the greatest and most execrable reproche, that they may doe. Behold our Lorde Iesus Christe, which made him selfe of no reputation for a time, (as Saint Paule speaketh) who being the fountaine of all

Phi. 2. 7.

life,

life, became mortall man, hauing superiority and dominion ouer the Angels of heauen, tooke the forme of a seruant, euen to shed his blood for our redemption, and in the ende to suffer the curse that was due vnto vs. And nowe for a recompence of all this, hee must at this day bee rent and torne in peeces of the Carion and stinking mouthes of them which name themselues Christians. For when they sweare by his blood, and by his death, and by his woundes, and by this, & by that, is not this as much as in them lyeth to crucifie the sonne of God, and to teare him as it were in peeces? And are not these altogether worthie to bee cut off from GOD: yea, from the world, and not to bee numbred in the bande and company of creatures? Vnto Iesus Christe for abasing, and humbling himselfe for vs, haue suche a rewarde at our handes? God vpbraideth the people of Israel in this sorte, O my people, what haue I done vnto thée? I haue brought thee out of Egypt, I haue conducted thee by the desart, I haue nourished thée in all gentlenesse and courtesie, I haue planted thée as in my heritage, that thou shouldest haue béene as a vine which shoulde haue borne mee good fruite, I bestowed all labour in keeping and tending thee, and must thou now bée turned into bitternesse vnto mée, and bring forth sowre, fruite to strangle and to choke mée? *Esay. 5. 2. Ier. 2. 21.*

Nowe the same appertaineth also at this day vnto vs. For when the sonne of God, which is appointed Iudge of the world, shal come in the last day, he may say vnto vs, What meaneth this? You haue borne my name to bée called Christians, you haue béene baptised, in witnesse and testimonie that I was your redéemer: I haue pulled you forth of the déepe dungeon, wherein you were plunged, I haue deliuered you from euerlasting death, by the cruel death which I suffered, and for this cause I became man, I submitted my selfe to the malediction of GOD my father, to the ende you might bee blessed by my grace, and by my meane. And beholde the rewarde you haue rendered mée. I haue béene rent in péeces of you, I haue béen as a iesting stocke, the death which I haue suffered hath béene had in derision and mockerie, my blood which is the washing of your soules, was as it were trampled vnder your féete: briefly, you haue taken all occasion to blaspheme and to raile on mee, as if I had béene some wretched, miserable, and forlorne creature.

Whē this shalbe rehearsed vnto vs of our soueraigne Iudge, shall not this bee to thunder on vs, and to throw vs down to the bottomles pit of hell? And yet notwithstanding, there are very few of vs which deepely consider of this. For if superfluous othes were at this day had in such great horrour and detestation, as they shoulde bee, men woulde not yeld vnto themselues any time hereafter such an outrageous boldnesse and libertie of swearing and forswearing. As for blasphemies, see wee not how common and rife they are? And in the meane time wee will bee very zelous for our owne honour and reputation, when the name of God is so troden vnder feete amongst vs. If one speake any thing reprochfully of ones father, hee will make a great quarell of it, or enter some action of slaunder: yea, many will reuenge themselues by their owne handes, and by all meanes they may on euery side: and it seemeth to them, that they haue an honest excuse to take vpon them the defence of their fathers. Beholde our soueraigne father shall sustaine wrong and iniurie, beholde in like manner our Lorde Iesus Christe, who not without cause is named The Lord of glorie, before whom euery knee ought to bow, as Saint
1.Cor.2.8 Paule speaketh to the Philippians, Loe he (I say) shalbe mocked:
Phi.2.10. than which despite none coulde bee wrought him greater, except a man woulde spit in his face: and yet notwithstanding, they which name themselues Christians, which make a countenance of procuring and mainteining his honour, will not bee moued any whitte therwith: nay, they themselues will bee the men, which will blaspheme him in most execrable manner! But for all this (as I haue saide) our Lorde will not ceasse to mainteine his owne honour, as he himselfe speaketh, when hee seeth that men are so wicked and prophane, so to violate his maiestie, so much as lyeth in them. For he
Esa.42.8 maketh a solemne othe, that he will wreake his vengeance vppon them for this wickednesse. I am the Lorde (saieth he,) this is my name, and my glory I will not giue to an other, neither my prayse to grauen images. Now, as he will not that his honour bee transferred to idols, so is it certaine it extendeth it selfe further: namely, that if men shal falsly abuse his holy name, they shall perceiue in what price it was vnto him. And therefore let vs not waite vntil this bee accomplished vppon vs, but let vs learne to beare such reuerence vnto our God, and to him that hath all soueraigne maiestie, that is, to our Lorde Iesus Christ, that we be throughly instructed to

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sweare in such sorte, that this bee alwayes to confirme, that it is bee by whom we are, that he is our Father, our Creator, and our Judge. Thus ye see in effect what we haue to gather of this place. Now here is with all annexed a threatening, whereby we are to understand the blockishnesse of men, how Satan hath as it were bewitched them in such sort, that they conceaue not the wrath and anger of God, when it is set before them. I will not holde him guiltlesse, which shal take my name in vaine. Loe God who speaketh. I pray you, ought not all the haires of the heads of them stand on ende, which blaspheme God so wickedly and villanously, as I haue saide? When one sweareth lightly by his faith, beholde God who is armed, and saieth, Forasmuche as thou hast not honoured mee, thou shalt giue an account for such treacherie: God cannot beare with vs for a simple lye: if one periure himselfe, this is muche warse: if another blaspheme; heerein is the extremitie and furthest degree of all euill, when we openly despite God, as if wee woulde arme our selues against him, and strike him with some deadly wounde. Nowe, if after this, one thinke not of this punishment which hangeth ouer, and is ready to fall vppon them which haue so falsified the name of God, or haue dishonoured him, must wee not needes say: that this proceedeth of some beastly drunkennes, and that men are altogether without sense, and vnderstanding: and that Satan hath altogether blinded them? Alas yes: & yet notwithstanding, this thing is so common, as nothing more. If some maister shoulde say in his house, I will bee obeied in all thinges: but loe, one thing which I desire aboue all to bee doone, and I will not suffer any one to faile heerein, but I will put him out of my seruice, or I wil correct and chastise him as hee deserueth. If some maister (I say) shoulde giue such a charge of some one thing, although in the rest a seruant woulde not be ouer diligent, yet in this woulde hee haue some feare. Nowe behold God curseth them which transgresse and offend against his lawe in any article. Cursed bee hee which honoureth not his father and mother, Cursed bee hee that stealeth, Cursed be he which committeth adulterie, Cursed bee he which obserueth not all the thinges which are conteined in the lawe. But heere, by some specialtie, hee manaceth a generall threate on them which shall abuse the name of GOD. By this hee declareth, that although hee will that wee obserue his lawe, in all pointes, and that our life bee ordered thereby, notwithstanding hee reser-

with this article to this place, as if hee woulde his name should haue an especiall priuiledge. Howbeit for all that, this threatning slip out of our minde, and that we consider not of it, and that it stayeth vs not, but wee venter still ouer boldly to sport our selues so with God, and his maiestie, must it not needes bee saide, (as I haue alreadie touched,) that the Diuell hath carried vs away headlong, and bereaued vs of al sense and reason? Yet if this threatning awake vs not at this day, wee shall in the end knowe that GOD hath not published his warninges in vaine. Let vs therefore learne to bee touched to the quicke, when God so precisely setteth himselfe against vs, and protesteth that hee will bee aduersary partie to them, which haue abused his name. For let vs consider what it shall cost vs, if we abstaine not from rash and superfluous othes, and about all from blasphemous periuries. Now the greatest excuse they haue which would diminish their faultes, is this that they cannot chuse, but sweare: because they haue beene so accustomed thereunto. O filie and miserable excuse. And yet see howe if euery one woulde bee his owne iudge, and speake the trueth, it is certaine hee might very soone forget his othes. For when question is of taking the name of God, if one woulde wel consider of the thing, and take good heede thereof, hee would not take it without great reuerence. And when one should come to sweare in iudgement, hee shoulde haue there as present the maiestie of God, he should behold him as iudge, when he calleth him to witnesse. This might very well be done. But what? Our tongue is so lauish, that wee vtterly despise and set at naught the name of GOD, as I haue already saide, howeuer a man crie and cal on vs for the contrary, and hammer vs neuer so much with warnings. For in very deede, the warninges and admonitions which for this abuse are made in holy Scripture, are as great strokes of maules & hammers wherewith God striketh vs, and yet we continue still the same wee were, and the name of God hath no greater honor and maiestie among vs, than it had before, when we were in ignorance, & wanted the admonitions conteined in the word of God. Howbeit they which haue any vnderstanding & feeling of his name, ought well to weigh, and consider that which is heere saide. And withal (as I haue declared) when we haue been warned of this, whereof we haue before considered: namely, that he which speaketh is the euerliuing, and our Creator, that it is hee which hath redeemed vs, and declared himselfe

selfe more then a Father and Sauiour towardes vs, if this remaine well imprinted in our memory, it is certaine we shal easily forget al othes. But if wee follow on still our wickednesse herein, that which is saide by the Prophet Zacharie, shall bee fulfilled vpon vs, that is to wit, this: They shall looke him whom they haue pearced: that is to say, him whom they haue wounded. For though men flatter one another, & make their othes but a laughing game, and thinke that this shall easily be pardoned them, God ceaseth not to be wounded, & he wil in the end shew, that he ought not so to haue bin set on, and warred against. Moreouer, we haue to note, that God would in this place by one special kind of abuse, shew briefly what reuerẽce we ought to beare generally to his name. It is true ỹ in expresse words heere is mention made of othes, but yet this doctrine ought to be further extended: namely, that when we think on God, or speake of him we do it with al reuerence, that we be awakened, not onely to honor and praise him above all, but to haue a feeling of his inestimable glory, before which the Angelles tremble, that wee which are poore and fraile creatures, as nothing more, may at least doe homage to the Soueraigne maiestie of our God, whensoeuer mention is made thereof. Behold one point which wée ought well to obserue in this sentence. True it is, that this doctrine is easie of it selfe, but yet obscure vnto vs, because it is so euill practised. When wée thinke of GOD, what vaine thoughtes come into our heads? Our nature verily is much enclined hereunto, as wée are full fraughted and stuffed with fancies and lyes, and there is nothing but darknesse in vs. But when men nourishe in them selues those euil and wicked fantasies, which they conceiue against the honour of GOD: this declareth that they haue conspired and made an agréement together with ỹ Diuel. And yet how many are there which take care for this, when there shall arise in them any wicked fansie, or such thoughts & imaginations which in their conscience they know to be wicked, and against the glory of God, to represse and keepe them vnder? Who vse any forcing of themselues to resist them? Nay rather, men take pleasure in them, and bathe themselues with much delight in such imaginations. And when the minde, that is, the vnderstanding of men, is so defiled, the rest is easily corrupted. And that this is so, consider wee by our wordes which follow. For how speake wee of God for the most part? What opinions holde wée of him? It see-

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meth men seeke nothing more busily, than to bee altogether corrupted. There neeueth but little leuen, to leuen the whole lumpe of
1.Cor.5.6 dough, saith S. Paule, handling the same matter with wicked speaches,
Gala.5.9 which defile and infect vs with euill vices. Now that of other is the worst, when men speake of God in mockerie, when one wil scorn and floute him, when one maketh a iest of him, not only after a fashion fonde and vaine, but villanous and execrable: Is not this euen of purpose and wilfull malice to violate the maiestie of God? And yet notwithstanding this is doone, and commonly vsed, so that there shal scarce bee any long discourse made, or great matter mainteined, which hath not I knowe not what intermingled, whereby God shal be contemned and set at naught. Shew wee not then heereby, that we neuer knewe aright what it is to worship him? Wel, we shall say euery day, Thy name be hallowed: but wee doe al the contrarie. Shal there then any other sentence of condemnation light on our heades than that? When we come to the Churche, wee will confesse with our mouthes, that wee desire that the name of God bee mainteined in his due honour: wee wil say as much at the Table, and euery one when hee riseth and layeth him downe to sleepe: (I speake of them which are not altogether bruitishe, for there are some which knowe not what it meaneth to make prayer vnto God:) But they which shall haue so much honestie as to pray vnto God, they shall well say with the mouth, Thy name bee sanctified, but this is scarse gone from the tip of their tongue, and beholde a false othe in their mouth, and they will tosse the name of God hither and thither. And whither tendeth his wickednesse, but to the violating of the maiestie of God, and to the dispiting of him, as if wee woulde giue him a blowe with a dagger, or spit in his face? And (as I haue saide) there needeth no other iudge to condemne vs in our false othes, than this protestation which wee make when wee desire of GOD that he will mainteine the holynesse of his name. And yet in the meane time, wee seeke to deface it as much as lyeth in vs. Now it resteth that wee must speake of the maiestie of GOD in all reuerence, especially, when wee talke of his workes. As howe? When wee speake of the time, whether hee sendeth faire wether, or raine: Loe these are markes of the Maiestie of GOD. If hee sende vs contrarie seasons, hee sheweth him selfe as a Iudge, to

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the end to make vs feele his wrath and indignation, that wee might enter into the examination of our sinnes, to bewaile them, and to vs vnto repentance. Now, if in steede of humbling our selues before God, and hauing a displeasure with our selues for our offences, wee are wayward and ouerthwart, (as wee see that some men are wont despitefully to say, And must this season continue in this sorte, and thus long?) and haue not recourse to our God, beseeching him to pardon our faultes, this shall be to take the name of God in vayne. As much is to be said of all the rest. I bring this example onely to shew, that when wee are to speake of the woorkes of God, it behoueth that either we perceiue him to be a Father in his goodnes, or feele him to be a Iudge in his rigour and seueritie. Therefore when God shal doe thinges which shall not fall out to our mind, and which shall be contrary to our wishes and desires, let vs know that hee grieueth and chastiseth vs: to the ende wee should enter into the acknowledging of our sinnes, to condemne them, and to be displeased with them. If wee glorifie not God in this thing, we vnhallow his holy name. And agayne, when God on the contrary side draweth vs to himselfe in all gentlenes, as a louing and pitifull Father, this is to the end wee be led vnto him, and that wee honour him so much the more. And if our vnthankfulnes is to be condemned for not honouring him in the first woord which he shall haue spoken, what shall bee sayde when we shall bee vpbraided of all these thinges, that by all the waies GOD shal haue sought to draw and allure vs, hee might winne vs to himselfe by none? But contrariwise, wee shall haue shewed our selues contemners of his maiestie, and shall haue troden his woorkes vnder our feete, or shall haue cast downe the grounde as hogges, and repyne agaynst him, I pray you shal not this be an horrible condemnation, if we be condemned heereof? Now, although God hath imprinted some marke of his maiestie in all his woorkes, and that hee ought to bee knowen of vs in raine, in fairs weather, in heate, in colde: briefly, in all the order of nature, yet hath he especially imprinted his marke in his woorde. True it is, that this is an intollerable and inexcusable vice, when wee reknowledge not God in the benefites which he hath bestowed on vs. We hold our life of him, that is, in him we liue, (as S. Paule speaketh) so that if wee haue not a remembraunce of God in all his benefites: this is already a wonderful vnthankfulnesse. But (as I haue aboue said) God aboue all would imprint his mark

Act. 17. 28.

in his worde. Let vs behold the heauen and the earth, and we shall see God declared fully in them. For what is this worlde, but a liuely Image (as S. Paule speaketh) in the which God sheweth and declareth himselfe? For albeit hée bée inuisible in his essence, yet sheweth he himselfe by his workes, to the end wée should worship him. But when we come to the holy scripture, in it shal we sée an image, wherin GOD openeth and declareth himselfe much more plainly and in more familiar wise vnto vs, than he doth eyther in the heauen, or in the earth: in such sort, that neither Sunne nor Mone, although they geue light vnto the worlde, doe so set forth the maiesty of God, as do the Law, the Prophets, & the Gospel. Now for all this, howe speake men of the scriptures? With what wicked boldnes and presumption? Do not men I pray you at this day geue themselues to lawlesse libertie, to speake of the word of God according to their owne fantasies? And when men enter into a dispute of the holy scriptures ouer the pot, in tauernes & alehouses, is there any question of humbling our selues vnder it, and that al knowing their owne rudenes and infirmitie, desire of God his holy spirit, to the ende, his secrets and mysteries be handled of vs as it behoueth? No, but these disputes are as in way of mockery to sport our selues. And by this a man may sée, more than were to be wished, how few there be truely religious and godly in the world. We sée some make thēselues game with ỹ Scripture, drawing into Prouerbiall sentences to moue laughter, that they make no other account than to iest and play with it, as if it were but a nose of waxe, which one may fashion as he liketh, and turne any way it should séeme good vnto him. Others are in their wandring and flitting opinions, reasoning why this, and why that? And when we come to the high mysteries of God, if they mislike vs, wée coulde wish that al were put out and abolished. And this is all one, as if we would plucke God out of heauen. So then let vs learne, that aboue al, God commendeth vnto vs the honour and authority of his word, as if he did say, I wil that you receiue all that which is conteined in the holy scripture, that is in my word, with al humility & reuerence. I wil that you yéld your selues tractable, although that which is there sayd, agrée not with your sense and reason, and that you could wish I had spoken after your manner and fashion. I will you do me this honour, as to imprison all your senses, and submit your vnderstanding to my word, and to say: Lord wée are thy disciples, we re-

Rom. 1.20

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reine without gainsaying whatsoeuer it hath pleased thée to teache vs, knowing that it is for our profit & saluation. Without exception therfore, let all that which is comprised in the holy scripture, be receiued with reuerence, and whē any question is of the holy mysteries of God, let vs not giue iudgement according to our owne wit and vnderstanding. And albeit the thinges be not conuenient and agreeable with our reason, let vs notwithstanding be held backe in a short bridle, that God may alwaies haue his whole entire authoritie ouer vs, and his worde a full course and libertie. And when wée read the holie scriptures, when we come to the Sermons, let vs alwayes beare in minde to say, Behold our God declareth him selfe vnto vs: he sitteth as our Iudge, wée are not to make toyes and gambaldes of those thinges he shall speake. As we sée, many will come to the Sermon: But what? They haue their hearts empoisoned against God and his worde, so that they can carie nothing thence which they peruert not with their wickednesse: yea, they wil be further enuenomed to spue forth their blasphemies at table or els wher, whē men shal not speak any thing to their lust and appetite. Loe how these men honor & sanctifie the name of God. Let vs learne then, that whether we reade the holie scripture, or heare it handled in a Sermon, to haue alwayes the name of God in reuerence, & to yelde vnto him such maiestie, that we tremble when one speaketh vnto vs hereof: And aboue all, when his worde is preached, as God speaketh by his Prophet Esaie. For let vs know, that so we shall declare our selues, not onely by words, but also by our déedes, that we are his true faithfull ones, and hé shal take and anowe vs for his people, and shall gather vs in the end into the inheritance of the kingdome of heauen. *Esai. 66.*

Now let vs cast our selues downe before the face of our good God, with acknowledging of our faultes, praying him that it will please him not to impute those wes haue alreadie committed, vnto vs: but that it will please him to reforme vs in such sort vnto himself, that we desire no other thing than to honour him, and to dedicate our selues vnto his seruice, to the end he may dwel amōg vs, and that our Lord Iesus Christ may reigne in vs both by his holy spirit & by his word: and so let vs say, Almightie God and heauenlie father, &c.

The 5. Sermon.

Deut. Chap. 5.

12 Keepe the Sabbaoth day to sanctifie it, as the Lorde thy God hath commaunded thee.
13 Sixe dayes thou shalt labour, and shalt doe all thy worke:
14 But the seuenth day is the Sabbaoth of the Lorde thy God, thou shalt not doe any worke therein, thou, nor thy sonne, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maid, nor thine oxe, nor thine asse, neither any of thy cattel, nor the stranger that is within thy gates, that thy manservant & thy maide may rest as well as thou.

After that it hath beene spoken of the pure and sincere worship of God, of serving him, and glorifying his name without vaine talking of it, either in othes or other thinges, but reuerently and to the honour of God: now here is mention made of the seruice of GOD, according to that he hath required in his lawe, touching the order he appointed for the exercise of the faithfull. As the Sabbaoth day, or day of rest was in part a figure, to declare that men could not rightly serue God but by mortifying all that which is of their owne nature, and afterwarde by dedicating themselues in suche sort vnto him, as if they were wholy separated from the world. Secondly, the day of rest had this ceremonious vse, to cause the people to assemble together, to heare the lawe, & to call on the name of God, to offer their sacrifices, and to do al that which should concerne spirituall order and policie. We see then howe in what sort mention is made of the Sabbaoth day. But this cannot be wel and sufficiently vnderstoode without some plainer and more distinct handling: namely, except both these parties shoulde particularly be intreated. We haue therfore first to note, that the Sabbaoth day was a shadow vnder the lawe, vntil the comming of Christ, to signifie, that God will that men rest themselues from their owne workes. And this is that

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which I haue saide in a worde, that we must mortifie our whole nature, if wee will bee conformable to our God. And that this is so, S. Paule hath also declared. Yea besides, wee haue sufficient testimonie heereof in the newe testament. But it shall suffice to haue alledged him at this tyme, which speaketh more fully heereof: namely, to the Colossians: when hee saieth, That wee haue the substance and the body of those thinges which were shadowed vnder the lawe. Wee haue it (saith he) in Christ. And therefore it was expedient, that the auncient fathers shoulde bee exercised in this hope, as well by the Sabbaoth day, as by other ceremonies. But sithence the thing is nowe giuen vs, wee ought not to stay our selues on these shadowes. Teue it is, that the lawe is so abolished, that yet wee ought to keepe the substance and trueth thereof. As for the shadowes and figures, they are done away by the comming of Christ. If one demande howe the ancient fathers knew of this sense and meaning? Moyses hath made declaration heereof, as it is sufficiently shewed in the booke of Exodus. For God, after he had published his law in the 20. Chap. hee reuealeth it to Moses, and declareth to what end this serueth, & saith, That he hath ordained the Sabbaoth day, as a signe, that the people of Israel should be sanctified vnto him. This is (saith hee) the marke of my sanctification, which I haue iustified among you. Now when the Scripture speaketh of our beeing sanctified vnto God, it is to separate vs from al that which is contrarie to his worship and seruice. But where shal one finde such puritie? We are in the world, and we know that in the world there is nothing but peruersenesse & wickednes (as saith S. John in his Canonical epistle.) Yea men neede not goe forth of thēselues to haue battel with God and his iustice. For al our senses and reason, and all our affections (as saith S. Paul to the Romanes) are enimies against God. When men loose the brydle to their thoughts and imaginations, to their desires and lusses, then make they open battell with God. And wee are not ignorant of that which is declared in the sixt of Genesis, That all that which mā can thinke and imagine, is nothing but euil continually: and all that which man forgeth in himselfe, & frameth in his owne shop, is vntoward and corrupt before God. So then we see wel, that we cannot be sanctified before our God: that is to say, wee cannot serue him in holines and purenes, being not yet separated from that vncleannes, and those defilings, which are contrarie thereunto, & not hauing first

Col. 2. 17.

Exod. 20. 13. 17.

1. John. 5. 19.

Rom. 8. 7.

Gen. 6. 5.

abolished al that which is of our own nature. It behoued then ỹ this should be represented in a figure to the ancient fathers, for that Christ was not yet fully reuealed vnto thē. But at this day we haue in Iesus Christ the accomplishment & the performance of all thinges. In this wise S. Paul speaketh of ỹ old mā, vnderstāding by this word, al that which we haue of Adā, that it ought to dye, & bee cleane abolished: namely, not the nature of our body or of our soule, but ỹ malice which is within vs, & the blindnes which maketh vs erre, the lusts & euil desires which are altogether rebellious to the iustice of God. It behoueth that al this, in as much as it is drawn frō Adam, be beaten down, & cleane takē away. And how is this done? This is not by our own industrie & labor, but Iesus Christ dying for vs, and to wipe out our sinnes, that they might be no more imputed vnto vs, hath gotten vnto vs also this prerogatiue, that by the vertue & power of his holy spirit, we might renoūce the world & our selues in such sort, that our carnal affectiōs no more reigne in vs. And albeit they be ful of rebellion, yet notwithstanding shall the Spirite of God beare rule ouer them, to represse them and to hold them backe as it were with a bryde. Therfore it is said, That we are raised with him: And S. Paule declareth the same also in the Chap. which I haue alreadie recyted to the Colossians. Now this was not yet manifested vnder the lawe. It behoued therfore that the fathers which liued in that time, should haue some ayde heerein, as they had the sacrifices, which nourished them in the hope of the death of Christ, to the end they should know, that their sinnes were purged by the blood of this Mediator. So had they also the Sabbaoth day for a testimonie & witnes, that the grace was obtained vs to mortifie our thoughts & affectiōs, to the end that God might liue in vs by the vertue of his holy spirit. Now we haue some entrance to the vnderstanding of this which hath beene shortly touched: namely, that the Sabbaoth day was as a figure to represent this which in very deed hath bin accomplished at the comming of our Lord Iesus Christ. And so let vs note that the Sabbaoth day extendeth it self to the whole seruice of God, to declare that men could not purely & sincerly honour him, but by renouncing of themselues, and by being separated from the defilements of the world, & of their own flesh. And for this cause the prophet Ezech. reproueth the Iewes that they kept not the Sabboth. For this is said vnto them as if they had in general broke ỹ whole law, & not without cause. For he which setteth at naught the Sabbaoth day, hath cast vnder foote all the seruice

Rom. 6. 6.

1. Cor. 15. 3.

Rom. 6. 4. 5.

Col. 2. 12.

Ezech. 20. 13. 16.

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of God as much as in him is. And if the Sabbaoth day bee not obserued, al the rest shalbe worthy nothing, as is spoken to the Prophet Esay, That men must bereaue themselues of their own proper vertues, that they must humble themselues: other wise, that this is not the rest of the Lord, which is agreeable to him, or allowed of him. By this we perceiue, that it auayleth nothing to keep the ceremonie only. For albeit the Iewes had well obserued the ceremonie, albe it they should haue assembled themselues together on the Sabboth day wout putting a finger to their houshold affaires, & yet in ỳ meane time should nourish in themselues their wicked thoughts & affections, & after put them in practise: this would haue beene but a meere mocking of God, an abusing of his name, a defacing & peruerting of the whole order he had instituted, as he also reprocheth thẽ. For the principal point was to haue respect to the truth of the figure: namely, to the spiritual seruice of God. And yet notwithstanding it behoued also, that the Iewes should keep ỳ ceremony which was commanded them. For God held them in this bridle, as not content that they should haue only the substance of things, but also the shadowes & figures of them, vntil ỳ coming of Iesus Christ. Now hereby vnderstand that which S. Paul saith, That now we are not tied vnto this bondage of the ancient fathers, to obserue in this sort the Sabboth day. For we must doe this honor to our lord Iesus Christ, that we content ourselues wt ỳ which he hath brought to vs in his own person, without reteyning any longer that which was exterior & ceremonious vnder ỳ law. Now then it is easie to gather how this obseruation perteineth vnto vs at this day. Touching the ceremony (as I haue said) it is past & done away. We must then come to the substance, that is, thatto the end we may serue God wel & sincerely, we learn to withdraw our selues from all our own wils, & all our euil thoughts & affections. And why? For otherwise when we wil serue God, we marre al. It behoueth therfore that al our own wisdom be laid aside, & that we heare God speak, not following our own wisdom & fantasies. Thus yee see the beginning & first steppe to the right obseruing of the Sabboth day, as wee ought: namely, not to trust to that which we think & imagine to be good. For we must rest. And how rest? Forsoth we must abide stil & quiet. Our thoughts must not stir to wãder & deuise this & that. We must (I say) remain quiet in the obedience of our God. And whẽ we shall be pricked & stirred vp by our lusts, let vs call to minde ỳ these are enimies against God, and that all our affections are wicked and rebellious. Esay. 56. 3 2, 6. Rom. 8. 7.

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We must then quietly rest in that behalfe, and yéld our selues ouer vnto God, to the end, that he onely may worke in vs, that he may conduct and gouerne vs by his holy spirite. By this wee see that GOD hath omitted nothing, when he appointed the Sabboth day. For if it extend so farre as vnto his whole seruice, what is wãting vnto vs for a perfect doctrine of sanctimonie and holinesse? Seeing then wee haue the holy Ghost which presenteth vnto vs all ỹ which is requisit, there is no further questiõ, but of walking holily in the obedience of our God. And how is this done? Verily, when with all reuerence and humilitie we receiue his holy worde, seeking to conforme our selues vnto his iustice. But because all that which is of our own, is contrary hereunto, we must begin at this end: namely, to renounce our selues. When this shalbe done, haue we not all that which is requisite for the seruice of God: But this is very hardly done, & therefore let vs take the more diligent heede to awaken and stirre vp our selues, when we heare that GOD commaundeth vs to obserue the Sabboth day, knowing that this is not in spoting our selues, but that we ought herein to vse force with our selues, considering that for all our life we shal haue well profited, if we come to obserue this day of rest, that is to wit, by renouncing all that which is of our owne, and by dedicating our selues wholly vnto our God. And by so much the more ought we too bee inflamed to obserue spiritually this rest of the Lord, seeyng we are franchised from this seruile subiection of the law, and that God hath geuen vnto vs a greater priuiledge, than vnto the auncient Fathers: in as much as he is contented that we bee mortified in our olde man, to be renued by his holy Spirite, so that we are no more bound to the obseruing of that ceremony which was so streightly kept vnder the law. Therefore when GOD handleth vs so louingly, this bindeth vs so much the more to haue respect vnto the principall, to the ende we may duely obserue it. And we may not alledge that the auncient fathers haue had the ceremony to stirre them vpp, and that this serued as a spurre to pricke them forward, for we haue much more than the outward & exteriour signe: for our Lorde Iesus Christ is appeared, that in him all this which hath beene figured vnder a shadow might be fulfilled. Wherefore we are not to desire these smaller things which haue been vnder the law. We see then how this which hath bene ordeined concerning the Sabboth day, is accomplished at this day touching the truth of the figure, whereof the

Col. 2. 17.

Fathers

fathers had a sight vnder a shadowe. And in deed wee must note, that this which was commaunded of the Sabbaoth day, is common & belonging vnto vs, as well as vnto them. For let vs take the lawe of God as it is in it selfe, and we shall haue a perpetual rule of iustice. Seeing it is most certaine, that vnder the ten commandements, God would giue a rule which should endure for euer. So let vs not thinke that this which Moses reciteth touching the Sabbaoth day, is superfluous, and not appertaining to vs. Not that the figure yet abydeth, but we haue the truth thereof. See to this purpose why the Apostle applyeth to the instruction of Christians, and of the new Church, this which is said of the Sabbaoth day. For he declareth that wee ought to conforme our selues vnto our God, and that this is our full & perfect felicitie. So, forasmuch as the chiefe happinesse of man consisteth in this, that he was created to the image of god, what ought we now sithence this image is defaced & blotted out by sinne, but to studie to renew and repaire it? See then how we ought to march on forwards to our perfection: namely, that in conforming our selues to our God, and to his wil, we enquire and seeke after his workes, to the ende to endeuour to do the like. Let vs know therefore that at this day, to the end we may the better serue God, our duetie is, to bestowe all the paines we are able, to tread vnder our owne thoughts and affections, that God may reigne and beare rule in vs, that he may guide & gouerne vs by his holy spirite. And so al hypocrites may well maske and disguise themselues, they may wel paint their doings, and shew faire countenances: yet nevertheless, as long as their wicked lusts shal be closed vp, and hid in their hearts, as long as they shal bee full of enuie, of rancors, of ambition, of cruelty, or of deceit, it is certaine they shal doe nothing else but violate the Sabbaoth day, or day of rest. And therefore we may conclude, that they peruert al the seruice of God, according to that we haue alreadie alledged out of Ezechiel: and as it is also spoken heereof in Jeremie. And marke wee why the ceremonie was so streight vnder the lawe. Thinke we that God euer tooke pleasure in the ydlenesse of men? Certaine it is he hath not. And yet he punished as grieuously him which brake the day of rest to labour therein, as if he had murdered a man. And why so? It seemeth that it is extreme cruelties, that for gathering of sticks on the Sabbaoth day a man must dye, as if hee did commit murder. Yet the Lorde condemneth him to death which gathered sticks in

Heb. 4. 10.

Num. 15. 32.

the Sabbaoth day. And why? Because that vnder this figure was ed inprehended the whole seruice of God. And see why in Ieremie it
Ier.17.21 is said, that they haue carried burthens on the Sabbaoth day. And why? It seemeth that God stayeth himself too much on a trifling and childish thing, but hee hath respect vnto this which was signified by the Sabbaoth day. And therefore when it was so neglected of the Iewes, this was as open sacriledge, whereby they did declare that the whole law was of final account amongst them. So then, to come to our selues, forasmuch as at this day we haue not this figure so precise, and so streight, but that God hath giuen vs a greater libertie, obtained vnto vs by the death and passion of our Lorde Iesus Christ, let vs learne with al diligence to bequest our selues vnto him, and to knowe (as I haue alreadie touched) that how fairely soeuer we shal haue trauelled in al the rest, it shall bee to small purpose, except our affections bee holde brydeled, and that wee bestowe all our paynes to renounce and take leaue of our lusts and desires in such sorte, that GOD alone may rule and gouerne vs, and that wee may protest that we desire nothing else, but to rest and repose our selues on him. And see howe God proposeth himselfe for an example. For hée is not onely content to commande men to rest, but hee hath
Gen.2.2. also shewed them the way héereto. For after hée had created the worlde, and all therein contained, hée rested: not that he was weary or néeded any rest, but this was to leade vs to beholde his woorkes, and that staying our selues thereon, wee might bee fashioned vnto him. Wil wee then obserue the spiritual rest? Euen as it is saide, that hee ceased from all his woorkes. So must wée also bée quiet and still, leauing to doe that shall séeme good vnto vs, and which our owne nature desireth.

If this example of God stirre vs not vp, wee declare sufficiently, that we séeke not to obay him, and by this meanes we searche not after, in any respect, the true felicitie, but desire willingly to abide in our pouertie and wretchednesse. The soueraigne goodnes and chiefe felicitie of men (as I haue saide) is this, that they cleaue vnto their God. Behold, our Lord calleth vs to himself, & sheweth, that wée can haue no true and holy conjunction with him, but by resting our selues from our owne woorkes. So then, if wée bee stil sitting in our fansies, if wee labour hande and foote to put that in practise

which

which shall seeme good vnto vs, it is certeine, this is as if we would breake the bondes which lincke GOD and vs together, and withdraw our selues from him as muche as in vs lieth. And by this may not a man see, that wee desire nothing els, but to bee set forth as a pray vnto Sathan, who driueth vs on headlong, and maketh vs to wander, forasmuche as wee remaine no longer vnder the gard and protection of our GOD? But what? Fewe there are, which consider of this aright. Wee see the libertie euerie man yeeldeth vnto him selfe. When one warneth a man, that hee ought not to walke after his owne heartes lust: What? I knowe (will hee saie) howe I ought to rule my selfe. Verilie, a man knoweth not howe to despite GOD in more open manner, than by suche a rebellion. This is as muche, as if wee would saie, that wee wil not that GOD haue any superiozitie ouer vs. It is true, men will not openly protest this, but the matter is so. For (as I haue alreadie saide) there is no true worship, except wee hence take our beginning, to withdraw our selues from our owne lustes and affections.

Now then, when men will bee so wise in their owne conceite, when they put suche confidence in their owne witte and reason, when they giue them selues all libertie to doe whatsoeuer seemeth them good, when they followe their owne affections and fansies, when they will take no paine to represse them, nay, are grieued when any woulde daunte and tame them, it is a sure signe, they neuer knewe wherein consisteth the true worship of GOD, neuer vnderstoode the chiefe and principall pointe of the lawe. And so let vs note well, that when GOD alledgeth his owne example, it is to allure vs with all mildenesse and gentlenesse to the obseruation of the lawe, and keeping of this spirituall rest. And withall let vs note (as I haue alreadie touched) that wee are wretched and miserable, when we are separated and remoued from him. And beholde the bonde of our coniunction: namely, that drawing neere to his trueth and religion, wee suffer our selues to bee guided and gouerned by him. Nowe a man may demaunde, for what cause the Iewes were commaunded to rest onely the seuenth day: for wee ought not for one day in the weeke renounce our lustes and affections, but wee must continue in that minde

all the time of our life. Briefly, the rest which the Lord commandeth is perpetuall, and without any ceasing or intermission. How then is it, that he hath chosen one onely day in the weeke? It was to shewe, that when we shall haue applied all our studies to abandon our false opinions, our wicked concupiscences, all that which proceedeth from our peruerse and corrupt nature, that yet wee can not come fully to this, vntill we be wholy ridde of our flesh. In deed, the faithfull ought their whole life time to obserue the Sabbaoth day, they ought to giue ouer their owne desires, forsake their owne workes, seeke to offer vp themselues wholy to God in all humilitie, to order themselues after his will, they ought to continue in his obedience: (I say) wee must doe so: or otherwise, all the seruice we shal do vnto God, is but feignednesse & hypocrisie: and as for him, hee will disallow and reiect it. Neuertheless, we cannot acquite our selues wholy in this, to renounce our affections in suche sort, that there be no blame founde in vs. Saint Paule glorifieth in this, that the world was crucified vnto him, and he vnto the worlde. Yet in the meane time, he ceaseth not to say, that the flesh fighteth with the spirite, and haue no agreement together: yea, he confesseth also in the seuenth to the Romanes, that he alwayes perceiued in him selfe this strife, that he did not the good which he would: that is to say, he accomplished it not with so feruent a desire, neither was he so resolued to walke according vnto God, but that he had alwayes many stoppes and hinderaunces to stay him in such sort, that hee seemed to halte, in steede of strong and vpright running. Sithence then it is so, let vs note, that not without cause God ordeined the seuenth day for the Sabbaoth day, signifying thereby, that wee can not neither in one day, neither in one moneth, come to this perfection of sanctimonie and holinesse which hee requireth of vs. And why? Because that when we shall haue manfully fought against the lusts and affections of our flesh, against our euil thoughts and desires: yet shal there bee alwayes a residue and remnant in vs, vntill we be fullie ioyned and associated with our God, and that he hath gathered vs into his heauenly kingdome. Vntill that time, there shall bee alwayes some temptations in vs, there shall bee alwayes some troubles, some vnquietnesse, wee shall alwayes feele (I meane those which seeke to please God) that we are yet subiect to many temptations, and that there remaine in our nature many prickes, by the whiche wee are stirred vp and prouoked to this and to that.

Gal. 6, 14.

Rom. 7. 19.

And

And are not these so many lets to hinder the spiritual rest? If a man did repose him selfe and rest so in God as he should doe: he should conceiue nothing in his fantasie which might turne him from the right way, he should haue in him no euill affections or desires. All these thinges should be farre from him. Therefore, when we conceiue so many wicked fantasies, loe, Sathan commeth to assaile and to shake vs with so many disquietinges. When we shall haue thought to do wel, there arise some thinges in our minde which tickle and flatter vs: and so albeit we hate that which is euill, yet by such temptations we are prouoked to pursue after, and to followe it. And by this a man may see, that it is no easie thing to be without all wicked concupiscences, and to cast them off, so that they beare no rule at all in vs. So then let vs continually follow this studie and desire of celebrating the spirituall rest of God, because we shall not come to the perfection thereof, vntill the ende of our life. Howe hereby we are admonished of two thinges: The one is, that we be in displeasure with our selues, & mourne perpetually for our sinnes. And although it seemeth that wee haue bestowed great paine to make our selues obedient vnto GOD: yet let vs knowe that we are alwayes but in the way, and that we lacke much of accomplishing that which God commaundeth, and requireth of vs in the lawe. And this one thing may occasion vs to humble our selues, seeing that GOD shall alwayes finde in vs ouermuch to condemne vs for his seruice, and that this spirituall rest of ours commeth not neere by many degrees to that which he commaundeth. On the other side, hauing this occasion of humbling & bewailing our selues in true repentance, let vs knowe this for the seconde point, that wee ought so much the more to be moued and pricked forwarde to make our further profite, when we may say, Howe now? It is true that God hath giuen me the grace that I desire to serue him: But howe doe I behaue my selfe herein? Alas, I am yet farre wide, & farre off from it. For when we perceiue this imperfection in vs, ought we not to enforce our selues forwarde in the seruice of God? So, detesting the euill and wickednesse which is in vs, let vs be pricked so muche the more forwarde alwayes to profite in this rest, and let euerie one call him selfe dailie to account for his going forwarde herein. Ye see then howe GOD, hauing giuen vs occasion to humble our selues vnder his hande, all the time of our life, sheweth vs that wee ought to be enflamed hereby to cor-

rect the vices which are in vs, and to mortifie more and more the lustes and desires of our flesh. Therefore let vs knowe, that it is not sufficient, that our olde man be in part crucified, except we be wholy buried with Iesus Christ (as Saint Paule speaketh in this seuenth of the Romanes, which wee haue alreadie alledged.) Yee see then what we haue to note touching the seuenth day, of which it is here spoken. Rom. 7. 4

It remaineth now, that we speake of the second point, wherin we haue before in a worde laide, that the Sabbaoth day was a ciuil order to exercise the faithfull in the seruice of God. For this day was appointed to assemble them together to heare the doctrine of the lawe preached, to receiue the sacramentes, to call on the name of God. And touching these pointes, it is common to vs with the auncient people of the Iewes. For although the figure is ceased, (I meane that whereof Saint Paule speaketh in the Epistle to the Colossians) yet notwithstanding, this which apperteineth to ciuill order, abideth stil, and hath his vse. And this policie, what is it? It is to assemble our selues together in the name of God. True it is, this ought to be done euery day, but for because of our infirmitie, or rather slouthfulnesse, it was expedient that one day should bee chosen out. If we were so feruent in ỹ loue of God as we should be, it should not nede to ordeine one onely day in the weeke, but all would both euening and morning assemble them selues together, to the ende wee might be edified more and more in the worde of God. And in deede this exercise were more than needfull for vs, considering that we are all so enclined vnto euill, that we nede not any thing to leade vs on further in wickednesse, and to lose the bridle more lose vnto vs. It is needefull then that wee assemble our selues together on euerie day in the name of GOD. But what? We see that with much adoe men will assemble them selues together on the Sunday, and that many are to bee holden to this order by force and violence. Hauing then suche an infirmitie in vs, let vs knowe that this order was not prescribed onely vnto the Iewes, of obseruing one certeine day, in the which they should come together: but to vs also as common with them. But yet herewithall wee haue to note, that this is not all: and that this were a verie bare and naked thing, that our handes onely, and our feete should rest, and that nothing els shoulde bee done. What must we then doe? Wee

ought to apply this rest to a more high and excellent thing: we ought to cease from those workes which might hinder the workes of GOD, let vs from calling on his name, stay vs from exercising of our selues in his holy worde. If wee employe the Sunday to make good cheere, to sporte our selues, to goe to games and pastymes, shall GOD in this bee honoured? Is not this a mockerie? Is not this an vnhallowing of his name? When our shoppe windowes are shutte in on the Sunday, when wee trauell not after the common order and fashion of men, this is to the ende wee shoulde haue more libertie and leasure to attende on that which GOD commaundeth, that is to witte, to bee taught by his worde, to assemble our selues together, to make confession of our fayth, to call on his name, to exercyse our selues in the vse of the sacramentes. Loe then to what purpose this policie ought to serue vs.

But nowe let vs consider, whether they which call themselues Christians, acquite themselues in this point, as were requisite. A greate parte of men thinke they haue the Sunday the better to attende on their worldly affaires, and they reserue to themselues this day, as if they had no other to deliberate for the whole weeke to come. Nowe if the bell shall ring to a Sermon, they thinke rather haue an other thing to doe, but to thinke on their businesse, and so make their account of this, and of that. Others glutte themselues by rysting, and are shut vp in their houses, because they dare not sheive a manifest contempt of their duetie in the open streetes. So that the Sunday is to them but a retreate, to withdraw themselues from the Churche and Congregation of GOD. By this we may see, what affection wee haue towarde all Christianitie, and the seruice of GOD, seeing that by this which was giuen vs for an ayde and helpe to drawe neerer vnto GOD, wee take occasion to withdraw our selues so much the further from him. And whither wander wee? Goe wee not so farre, as to recule and flee backe wholy from him? Is not this a diuelishe wickednesse of men? And yet this is so common, as it is pitie to beholde. And would to God we stoode in neede to search for examples herein further off, and that they were more rare to bee founde. But woe is vs, howe all is prophaned and violated, that the most parte are nothing

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carefull for the right vsage of this day, which was ordained to the end that we shoulde bee retyred from al worldly cares, and drawen backe from all other businesse, to yelde vp our selues wholy vnto God.

Moreouer, let vs know that the Sunday is not ordained for vs only to come to the Sermon, but to the end we employ the rest of the time to laude and praise God. Note we this. For although hee nourisshe vs euery day: yet notwithstanding, wee meditate not sufficiently of the benefites he bestoweth on vs, to magnifie him in them. True it is, that this should be but a poore thing, if we should consider of the benefites of God but on the Sunday. But on the other dayes, because we are occupied ouermuch about our worldly affaires, wee are not so giuen to God as in that day, which is altogether dedicated vnto this. The Sunday therefore ought to serue vs for a tower, to make vs mount on high to view the workes of God from a far, whē we are neither hindered nor occupied with any thing, but that wee may apply al our senses, & our whole vnderstanding to reknowledge the gratious giftes and benefites which he hath bestowed on vs. And when we shal wel haue practised this on the Sunday: namely, shall haue duply considered of the workes of God, it is certaine, that al the rest of our time, we shal be giuen hereunto, and that this meditation shal so fashion and polish vs, that the Monday, and al the rest of the weeke, we shal be led to thanke our God, when so before hande wee shal haue premeditated on his workes, to make our profite therein. But when the Sunday is spent not only in games and pastimes full of vanitie, but in thinges which are altogither contrarie vnto God, that men thinke they haue not celebrated the Sunday, except God therein be by many and sundrie wayes offended: When men (I say) vnhallowe in such sort this holy day, which God hath instituted to leade vs vnto himselfe, is it any meruel if wee become brutishe and beastly in our doings all the rest of the weeke? What is to bee done then? Let vs all knowe, that this is not sufficient, that wee come to the Sermon on the Sunday, to receiue some good doctrine, and to cal vppon the name of GOD: but wee must digest those thinges wee heare and receiue, and apply al our senses to the better vnderstanding of those benefites which God bestoweth on vs, and that by this meane we bee so formed and fashioned to this thing, that the Monday, and all the rest of the weeke beside, cost vs

nothing,

nothing, to aspire and to come to our God: and that wee néede but to call to minde, that which wée shall haue learned before at good leasure; when our mindes be as it were vnwrapped from all those thinges, which hinder vs to recount the workes of God. And this wée haue to note touching the order wée are to obserue at this day, which is not in keeping the ceremonie so streightlie as it was obserued vnder the lawe. We haue no longer this figure. But this rest day is to assemble vs together, to the ende that, according to our infirmitie, we be better exercised to applie our selues to the seruice of God, and to haue this day wholie consecrated vnto him, to the end we be drawne altogether from the world, & that this may serue vs the better, for the rest of our time, as we haue saide. And withal we must note, that this is not enough, that euerie one in particular and alone thinke on God, and call to minde his workes on the Sunday: but wée must mæte together one certeine day to make publike confession of our faith. It is true, that this ought to bée done euery day (as we haue saide;) but because of the rawnesse and slouth of men, it is behouefull to haue one speciall day, which may wholie be dedicated and appointed to this vse. I confesse inel that we are not bound to the seuenth day (as indeed we obserue not it day which was commanded the Iewes, for this was the Saturday,) but to shew the libertie of Christians, the day hath bene chaunged to the Sunday, for almuche as Iesus Christ in his resurrection hath deliuered vs from the bondage of the lawe, & hath cancelled the bond therof. This was the cause, why this chaunge hath béene made in the day. But yet wée ought to obserue this order of policie, to haue some day in the weeke, be it one, or be it two, for this is left in the choice and libertie of Christians. But that the whole people may be assembled, it is conuenient that one certeine day bée ordeined, to receiue the Sacramentes together in common, to haue the inuocation of the name of God, and to shewe an vnitie and concord in faith and religion. It sufficeth not then, that euerie one withdrawe him selfe into his owne house, either to reade the holie scripture, or to pray vnto God, but it behoueth wée come into the companie of the faithfull, and there declare the concorde and agreement wée haue with the whole bodie of the Churche, and celebrate in suche wise this order, as the Lorde hath commaunded. But what? We may sée here the vnhallowing of the seruice of God. For, as I haue alreadie touched, are there not

many which wil shewe them selues herein dispitefull vnto God, and that will be exempted from the common lawe and order? True it is, that they will happilie come fiue or sixe times in the yeare to the sermon. But what to doe? Euen to make a mockerie of God, and of al his doctrine. These are indeed in the number of those hogges, which came to defile the temple of God, and deserued rather to bee in stables: & better it were they held them selues in their stinking dennes: to speake briefly, it were better that suche knaues were altogether cut off from the Churche of God, than to shewe them selues in the companie of the faithful. But yet how many times come they among them? The bel shall ring long enough, before a man may espie them in any place. So then wee ought with more diligence to take heede to our selues, and quicken vp our selues to make such a confession of our faith, that God may be honored with one common accorde among vs. Moreouer, wee must abolish all superstitions. For wee see how among Papists men thinke to serue God by slouth and idlenes. This is not the manner, after which we ought to celebrate the Sabbaoth day: but to applie it to his right and lawfull vse, wee must knowe (as we haue aboue said) that our Lord requireth nothing els, but that this day bee employed to heare his worde, to make our prayers in common, to make confession of our faith, and to vse the Sacramentes. See whereunto wee are called. And yet wee see howe all hath bene corrupted & brought to vtter confusion in Poperie: for as they inuented dayes to honour their hee and shee Saintes, and haue forged to them selues idols, so haue they thought they ought to serue them in all idlenesse. Now seeing the world is so corrupted, we ought so much the better to note this declaration of the Sabbaoth day, as is here touched by Moses. And withall let vs knowe to what end our Lorde hath commaunded the auncient people to haue one day in the weeke to rest them selues. And at this day, vnderstanding, howe this outwarde ceremonie is abolished by the comming of Christ, let vs giue our selues to the spirituall rest: that is, to dedicate our selues wholie vnto God, renouncing our owne desires and affections: and further let vs reteine the exteriour policie, as farre as it apperteineth vnto vs: namelie, to cease from our earthlie affaires, and all worldly businesse, to attend the better on the meditatiō of the works of God, that wee may bee exercised to knowe the benefites hee bestoweth on vs, and aboue all, that wee may bestow all our paines in acknow-

knowledging his gratious fauour, which hee offereth dayly in his Gospel, to be confirmed and established more and more therein, and when we shal haue employed the Sunday to praise and magnifie the name of God, and to meditate on his workes, let vs shew al the rest of the weeke how we haue profited heerein.

Now let vs cast our selues downe before the face of our good God, with acknowledging of our faults, praying that it wil please him to make vs feele them better than wee haue done. And because wee can not in any respect serue him, vntill this wickednesse and peruersnesse which is in vs be abolished: and because he hath shewen that we shal not cease to make warre against his iustice, as long as wee shall loose the bridle to our wicked thoughtes and concupiscences, pray we, that it will please this good God, by the power of his holy spirite, to giue vs this grace, to bee fully conformed vnto him, which is dead and risen for vs, to the end he might mortifie and quicken vs, that wee may beare the markes of our Lord Jesus, euen in renouncing our selues, and ordering our whole life so to his will, that wee desire nothing, but to bee conformed to his iustice, to the ende his lawe may bee accomplished in vs, as wil spirituall: and that wee bee returned both in flesh and in spirite, to liue vnder his obedience. And forasmuch as wee so ofte returne vnto our selues, pray wee that it will please this good God to beare with vs in our infirmities, till his rest bee truely accomplished in vs, and that hee hath gathered vs into his heauenly kingdome. That it wil please him to graunt this grace, not onely vnto vs, but to al people and nations of the earth, &c.

Maister Iohn Caluin,

The 6. Sermon.

Deut. Chap. 5.

13 Sixe dayes thou shalt labour, and shalt doe all thy woorke:
14 But the seuenth day is the Sabbaoth of the Lorde thy God, thou shalt not doe any woorke therein, thou, nor thy sonne, nor thy daughter, nor thy man seruant, nor thy maide, nor thine oxe, nor thine asse, neither any of thy cattel, nor the straunger that is within thy gates, that thy man seruant and thy maide may rest as well as thou.
15 Remember that thou wast a seruant in the lande of Egypt, & that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence with a mightie hand, and a stretched out arme: therfore the Lord thy God commanded thee to obserue the Sabbaoth day.

Chandler [illegible] in what sorte, and to what end the commandement of obseruing the [illegible] day was giuen to the Iewes. It was [illegible] general, that this was a figure of the spirituall rest, which the faythful ought to keepe, the better to serue and woorshippe God. And seeing our Lorde hath brought vs the full accomplishement of this, it hath beene said, that we must no longer rest and stay our selues on this shadowe of the Lawe, but be content that our old man be crucified by the vertue of the death and passion of our Lord Iesus Christ, to the ende wée may bée renewed in our mindes wholy to serue our God. Withal wée noted, that wée stande in néede of some order and policie amongst vs, and therefore it behoued that some certaine day shoulde bée appointed to assemble vs together, to bée confirmed in the doctrine of God, and to make our profite therein euery day, euen all the time of our life, that wée bée also exercised to call vppon his name, to make confession of our fayth, and that the rest of this day bée spent in considering the benefites wée receiue at all times at the hande of God, to the end he bée the more glorified in them. And now haue we to note this which followeth in the text of Moses.

Moses, Sixe dayes thou shalt labour, (saith the Lorde.) This ought not to bee understood, as if God commanded vs hereby, precisely to labour. Howbeit, it is true, that we are borne to this, and we know that God meanet not we should bee vyle as long as we liue in this world. For he hath giuen men hands and feete, force and strength, to this purpose. Yea, before sinne entred, it is saide that Adam was placed in the garden of Eden, to dresse it, and keepe it. Albeit the labour and trauell which men are now enioyned, is a chastisement for sinne. For it is thus denounced them, In the sweate of thy face, thou shalt eate thy bread. This is a curse and malediction laide on mankinde. For wee are not worthy to enioy the condition which was giuen to our father Adam, that he might liue at pleasure without troubling or tormenting himself. But yet, before that sinne entred into the world, and that wee were in this sort condemned of God to this painful and wearisome trauel, it was requisite, that men should exercise themselues with some labour. And why? Because this is contrarie to our nature, that we should be as logges and blockes vnprofitable. So then it is very certaine, that wee ought to apply our selues to some labour all the time of our life. But yet heere in this place it is more straightly commanded, that wee trauel sixe dayes. For there were other solemnities vnder the Lawe, besides the rest of the Sabbath. There were feastes, which might happen in the midst of the weeke: but because the number of them was small, being onely foure dayes in the yeare, there is no mention made of them, but onely of the Sabbath. Therefore, when it is saide: Thou shalt labour sixe dayes, our Lord would hereby signifie vnto vs, that we ought not to complaine of yelding vnto him one certain day, when he leaueth vnto vs sixe for one. As if he did say, Shal the task and charge bee great vnto you to chuse one day which may be wholy giuen to my seruice, that you do no other thing in it, but reade and exercise your selues in my lawe, or heare my doctrine which shalbee preached vnto you, a day to come to the Temple, to the end you may be there confirmed by the sacrifices which are there made, a day to call vpon my name, to declare and protest, that you are of the number and companie of my people? Ought this to bee grieuous and burthensome vnto you: seeing you haue sixe dayes free, to traffike, and to doe your businesse in? When I vse such gentlenesse towardes you, that I demaude but one day absolute, is not this an ouer great vnthankfulnes on your part, if

you complaine of this time, as being euill employed, and if you be such couetous and niggardly wretches, as not to spare mee one seuenth part of the time? I haue giuen you your whole life. Whensoeuer the Sunne shineth vpon you, you ought to acknowledge my goodnesse, and how that I am a liberal Father towards you. For this Sunne, which I make to shine, is to giue you a meane to go and walke by, to the end that euery one may doe his businesse. And yet for all this, why is it that I shall not haue one day among seuen, in which euery one shoulde withdrawe him selfe from his labour and trauell, that you bee not wrapped in the cares of the world, and so haue no leasure to thinke vppon mee? Howe then we see, that this sentence of trauelling sixe dayes is not placed as a commaundement, but as rather a permission, which God giueth, and that to reproch the vnthankefulnesse of men, if they obserue not the Sabbaoth day, and sanctifie it in such sorte, as we haue spoken thereof. And here hence we haue to gather a good and profitable admonition: namely, that when wee are slowe to obay God, wee ought to consider of the benefites he bestoweth vpon vs. For this ought to make vs rest with a more fatherly zeale in the practising of those thinges, which God commaundeth vs, when we shal wel consider that he handleth vs not rigorously, neither presseth vs ouermuch. Loe our God might vse a straighter bridle if it pleased him, he might force vs to things so hard, that there were no meane nor way to set vs forward therin: but he considereth of vs, and conducteth vs as a father would doe his children. Seeing then it is so, that he in such sorte beareth with vs, ought not we to be stirred vp so much the more to doe this which hee commaundeth? So then, as often as the commandementes of God are hard, or seeme so vnto vs, let vs knowe that hee presseth vs not by many degrees, so much as he might. For wee should bee tormented out of measure, if the Lord would vse the rigour of extremitie. Know we therfore, that he beareth with vs, and that he vseth heere towards vs a more than fatherly goodnesse. True it is, that the lawe of God is in it selfe impossible vnto vs, not onely to obserue it in most perfect manner: but when a man by his natural vertue and strength wil endeuour to acquite him selfe towardes God, hee shall not bee able to moue one finger, nor to haue one good thought to knowe howe he ought to beginne: yea, so farre are wee from being meete and able to obay God, and to put in practise, that which is contained in his lawe, that

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all our thoughtes and affections are so manie enimities against GOD. Euen, by their owne power, could accomplish the lawe, it shoulde haue bene saide vnto them, Trauell yee. But contrariwise, it is saide vnto them, Rest yee, to the ende that GOD may worke. So then the lawe may well bee impossible touching vs, but yet it is possible for GOD to imprinte it in our heartes, and to gouerne vs by his holie spirite, in suche wise, that this yoke shall bee easie and sweete vnto vs, and that it shall haue no hardnesse in it to grieue and trouble vs. So then, when men shal haue well considered of this thing, they shal bee conuinced that God beareth with them as a father, whiche shewe himselfe pitifull towardes his children. And therefore let vs take diligente hede we be not vngratefull, but be prouoked and allured to serue our GOD, so muche the more, seeing hee commaundeth vs not those thinges, whiche might seeme ouer bitter and painefull vnto vs, but hath a due regarde to our power and abilitie. Thus yee see what wee haue to note out of this place, where our Lorde declareth that hee leaueth vnto men their commoditie. It is true (as it was yesterday touched,) that wee ought to bee so spirituall, as euerie day to assemble our selues together to call on our GOD, that we ought to mount vp to the heauenlie life, leauing all our worldlie affaires. But what GOD seeth that we are enuironed and inclosed with our flesshe, that we crepe and traile on the grounde, that our infirmities ouerheare vs, in suche sort, that wee can not haue an Angelicall life. GOD therefore seeing such a weakenesse and weardnesse in vs, hauing pitie, that we can not acquite our selues fullie in this whiche were our office and dutie to doe, hee releaseth vs, and sheweth not the extremitie of his rigour, but saieth, that hee is content if wee dedicate one day vnto him, as if this only serue vs for all the rest of the weeke. And why? For (as I haue saide) hee dealeth not extreamelie with vs, but considereth that we are ouer wraie and fraile. Therefore, when he beareth with vs after this maner, and leaueth vnto vs our profites and commodities, so muche more disloiall, wicked, and inexcusable are wee, if wee bee not inflamed to yeelde our selues wholie vnto him. Nowe, it followeth immediatelie, that neither our manservant, nor maide, nor oxe, nor asse, nor any of our cattell, shall labour on the Sabbaoth day, nor the stranger, Rom. 8. 7.

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which is within our gates. Touching the cattell, one might thinke it straunge, that God hath compelled them vnder the obseruation of this rest, seing it is so high & heauenly a mysterie, as it was yester-
Exo. 20. 13. & 17. day entreated. And doeth such geare apperteine to oxen and to asses? God saieth, I haue giuen you the Sabbaoth day to be a signe that I sanctifie you, and that I am your God, which reigneth in the middest of you. This is not belonging as common to all mortall men: For God graunteth not this grace to Painims and vnfaithfull ones, to sanctifie them: he speaketh onely to the people which he chose for his inheritaunce, & which he adopted. Now, when the Sabbaoth day is a signe that God hath separated the faithfull of his Churche from the rest of the worlde, why is this extended to oxen and to asses? But note wee, that this is not done for the bruite beastes sakes, but to the ende that men shoulde haue a monument before their eyes, to be so muche the more touched therewith. This commaundement then, is not applied to the beastes, which haue neither vnderstanding nor reason, but this is directed vnto men, which ought to make their profite of it. We see that the sacrifices were made of bruite beastes, we see what furniture there was, what vessels of gold and silver, and other like things: and when all these were hallowed, is it to be vnderstood that God put his spirite into these corruptible metalles, and into thinges which had no sense and feeling? Nay: but all this is belonging to the vse of men: as all creatures are made for our vse and behoofe. And God not only ministreth vnto vs in thinges apperteining to this present, fraile, and brittle life, but he giueth them vnto vs as tokens of his grace, to be meanes & aydes to draw vs vp on high to heauen. Therfore when God would that the oxen & the asses should rest them selues this seuenth day, this is not that he maketh them partakers of this spirituall rest, whereof wee haue aboue entreated, but this was to y end the Iewes seing their stables closed vp, should be put in minde to say: Now now God setteth here before our eyes, this signe and sacrament visible euen in the bruite beasts, and this is to the end that wee on our part should be the better kept & holden in his seruice: that wee shoulde knowe that this were to breake the whole lawe, if wee haue not regard vnto this which is the chiefe and principall pointe of all our life, namely: that we learne to renounce our selues, and folowe not our owne lustes, reason, or wisedome: but that wee suffer our God to rule and gouerne vs, and that wee be as

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dead creatures, that hée may liue in vs. and not followe our owne ſwinge, which is altogether corrupted. Thus it behoued the Iewes déepely to weigh, euen in the bruite beaſtes, this viſible ſigne, which was giuen to the ende this might reſtraine them ſo muche the more. and that they ſhoulde bée admoniſhed by this meane, to obſerue the Sabbaoth day, with all reuerence. Withall we ſée, how in all times God handleth men according to their hardneſſe, and that hée hath prouided them of méete and conuenient remedies, forasmuche as they are not inclined of them ſelues, before he draweth them in this manner. And this is not only for the Iewes, but for vs. Let vs therfore acknowledge the great goodneſſe and mercie of our God, which forgetteth not, nor omitteth any thing of all that which might remedie our vices. And withall let vs acknowledge ỳ peruerſeneſſe which is in vs, that wée flatter not our ſelues, nor giue the bridle to our affections, ſithence we haue néede to bée conſtreined, and that God giue vs many prickes with the ſpurre, as to dull and reſtie iades. And when God pricketh and ſpurreth vs in ſuch ſort, know we that it is not without good cauſe, but that he doth it, becauſe we are ſo croked and peruerſe to be ruled, becauſe wée are ſo frotward and rebellious. Let vs then beginne to diſpleaſe our ſelues in all our luſtes and affections, and learne to impriſon our ſelues ſo farre, that nothing hinder vs to follow the way which God would lead vs in. And although our nature alwayes reſiſt, yet let vs enforce our ſelues to walke after his will, vntill wée be fully ruled and ordered by our God. Loe, what we haue to beare in minde vpon this place: beſides that which ſhalbe by and by touched of man ſeruantes, and maide ſeruantes: namely, that God putteth the Iewes in remembrance that they were ſeruantes in the lande of Egypt, and therefore that they ought with all gentleneſſe, to entreate them, which are vnder their rule & authoritie. For he ſaith, Thy man ſeruant, & thy maide, ſhal reſt them ſelues. And why? For thou waſt ſomtime in bondage: the time hath bin thou couldeſt wel haue wiſhed that one had giuen thée ſome reſt and releaſe from thy labours. Thou oughteſt then to vſe ſuch gentleneſs towardes them, which are vnder thy hande. But here it might ſéeme, that God hath ordeined the Sabbaoth day, not for a ſpirituall order, (as it hath bene aboue ſaid:) but that it might ſerue as a meane vnto charitie. For he ſaith, If thou wert in bondage, wouldeſt thou not that one ſhoulde giue thée ſome releaſe?

Wouldest thou alwayes bée oppressed with labour and trauell? Surely by thy good will thou wouldest not. It behoueth then that thou beare also with others. Now this is not for the seruice of God, but rather instituted for common charitie, which ought to bée extended towarde our neighbours, howe euer in degrée they be vnderlinges vnto vs. But forasmuche as this commaundement is conteined in the first table of the lawe, it is certeine that this which is hœre touched, is but as accessarie. I say the first table of the lawe, for it is not without cause that God hath so diuided his lawe, which hée wrote in two stones. Might he not haue wrote them in one stone, if he had would? Why then hath he made of them two seueral partes? This is not without great reason. For in the lawe of God there are two principall articles. The one concerneth our dutie towardes him: the other our dutie we owe to our neighbours, which liue and are conuersant with vs. As our whole life, if we consider wel, ought hereunto to be referred. That is, that first in knowing we haue a God, to whom we are to liue, we walke in obedience: séeing wée holde our life of him, wée doe him homage and reuerence therefore: séeing he hath created vs into a farre better hope, and hath adopted vs for his children, wée glorifie him for so great mercie and goodnesse: séeing he hath redéemed vs by the blood of his sonne, wée become his, endeuoring to withdraw our selues from the defilemẽts of the worlde, to be vnto him liuely and vnspotted sacrifices, we call on him, hauing our recourse vnto him alone, we render him thanks for all his benefites bestowed vppon vs. Wée sée then the first poincte of our life consisteth in the honour wée ought to giue to our GOD. Againe, séeing it pleaseth him further to proue our obedience, by liuing with men in al vprightnesse, none shal be giuen to his priuate profite, but that we séeke to serue to the commoditie one of an other, that there be mutuall honestie betweene vs: so as we abstaine not onely from fraude, violence, and crueltie, but that our life be sober and modest, that wée bée not dissolute, wicked, and brutish in our liuing. And this is the seconde poincte of our life. Now séeing it is so, that this commaundement of the Sabbaoth day is conteined in the first table: it followeth that it apperteineth to the spirituall seruice of GOD, and that here is no question to bée made of the charitie wée owe vnto our neighbours. And why then is this matter here treated of? It is asmuche as if our Lorde

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did say, This day of rest, of some superabundance and ouerplus, shal serue you to this, that your men seruants, and your maides, haue a release with you from their labours. Not that this was the chiefe & principal end whereunto God tended. For this was not his principal meaning, that there should be one day in the weeke, in the which a man should cease from his labours, to the end he might breath for that day, & not toile so continually, as to faint for wearinesse. This was not the cause which moued God to ordaine the Sabbaoth day, or day of rest: but it was to this end, that the faithful shoulde knowe they ought to liue so holily, as to rest from al their affections and desires, that God might wholy worke in them. For the rest, it serueth as a benefite of supererogation, as we say. Behold our Lorde sayth, Consider yee that sith you haue this warrant among you, that I sanctifie you, that you seeke to giue vp your selues wholy vnto mee: Yet, loe one thing which shal serue you further, and this is for your profite: namely, that your familie shal not toile, & ouerworke themselues continually. For there must bee some rest for your men seruants, and your maides, and your cattel: you shal haue then this as of superabundance. Nowe therefore wee se why heere is expresse mention made, that the Iewes were seruants in Egypt, and that it behoueth they haue some regard of them which are held as captiues and bondemen vnder their hands. For Moyses speaking of men seruantes and maydes, vnderstandeth it not after the common order and fashion among vs. For with them, the seruantes were slaues and bondmen, they burthened them, and helde them vnder, as the oxen and the asses, they had so vile and barbarous a condition, as was pitie to beholde. God then sheweth that the people of the Iewes obseruing the rest, shall receiue profit and commoditie by their familie. You ought to be so farre (saith he) from cõplaining of the time which I haue reserued vnto my selfe, that of seuen dayes there should be one dedicated to my seruice: that if you be not ouer cruel and vnmerciful, if you vse not tyranny toward them which are vnder your authoritie, such a day would seeme conueniẽt vnto you to be chosen. For if you should haue no other regarde, but this policie: namely, that in this day your seruants shall haue some rest, this ought to leade you hereunto: but vnderstande you alwayes, that I haue not ordayned it onely for your familie, but for this ende, you might aduise your selues, considering of this

which I haue shewed, that beeing separated from the vnfaythfull, you bee vnto me a royal priesthood, that you desire nothing else but to serue mée in al vprightnesse, and in a pure and sincere conscience. When you shall haue this consideration, then shal you know that this day shal further serue you for some earthly profite and commoditie, albéeit in the meane time, this is not that you ought to séeke after. To speake in a word, our Lord in this place declareth vnto vs
Mat.6.33. that which in like manner hath bene pronounced by Iesus Christ, that when wée shall séeke the kingdome of God, all other thinges shalbe cast vppon vs. For we are of that minde, that if we endeuour to mount on high to the heauenly life, and bestowe our studies herein, we shal dye for hunger, and this shalbe to turne vs from all profits and commodities. Briefly, the diuel cõmeth alwaies to persuade vs vnder this shadowe and wilinesse, that if wee employ our selues to the seruice of God, wée must néeds dye of famyne, and that wee shal liue to bée pitied of others for our miserie, that wée must néeds quit our selues of the whole world. But of a truth we cannot serue God, except wée bée ridde of all our affections, and cast from vs these worldly cares, which presse vs downe ouermuch. Yet neuertheless, wee must rest vppon this blessing which is promised vs: namely, that if wée séeke after the kingdome of heauen, wée shalbée blessed in these temporal and transitorie things, that our Lorde wil haue pitie vpon vs, and wil giue vs al that which he knoweth to bée néedful and conuenient for this present life: onely, let vs but waite for from him those thinges which wée by our industrie and labour cannot obtaine. That then is the thing which is declared vnto vs in this place. Now this sentence ought to serue vs as a pricke to stir vs vp to follow that which God hath commanded vs. For the chiefe thing which stayeth vs from ruling and ordering our life to the obedience of God, is this, that being too much wedded to our selues, wee thinke this shalbe against our profite, and we wil alwaies prouide, howsoeuer the case stands, for our cõmodities, in those things which appertaine vnto the world. Behold how men cannot followe God, but rather forsake him, and drawe cleane backward from his law: for that they thinke, if they serue God, they shall neuer thryue. Now this is so wicked an vnthankfulnesse, that it serueth to aggrauate an hundred times more our rebellion. What must we thẽ do? Let vs note wel, that we shal not be able to serue God with a frank

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and frée courage, except wee bee resolued, that hee prouideth for our whole life, and that hee will not forget vs, as it is spoken in the person of Iosue. For the Apostle in the Epistle to ỳ Hebrews applyeth this doctrine to al the faithful. Yea to drawe them from ouermuch care and carcking, he saith, Thy God wil not faile thée, hee will not forget thée. So if once we can be perswaded that God watcheth ouer vs, & that he will liberally prouide for our necessities, it is certaine wée shal not bée so busied in our earthly affections, wée shall not bée so easily turned from seruing of GOD, wée shall not bée hindered to meditate and thinke on the heauenly life, wee shall so passe through this world, as to vse the creatures therof, as if we vsed ths not, because we know alwaies, that we ought to make our race further. Lo, in summe, what we haue to beare in mind of this doctrine, wherein our Lord sheweth, that albeit this which he commaundeth of obseruing the Sabbaoth day bee spiritual: yet notwithstanding, that men shal perceiue herein their gaine and profite, and that God wil blesse them, when they shal haue a respect vnto him, and shall not ouer busily & grédily séeke after that which belongeth to their temporal and earthly commodities. Now withal wee are warned, that if any beare rule ouer others, they ought not to despyse their neighbours although they be inferiour to them. And this extendeth it selfe very farre. For we ought not onely to expound it of men seruants, and of maides: but of the poore, of them which are neither in authoritie, credite, nor estimation: of al subiectes, of them which in the eye of the world are not worthy to be compared with vs. For wée see what the pride of men is, although wee haue no occasion to aduaunce our selues aboue others, yet euery one will desire, and seeke after some preeminence and superiorities. Seeing then there is such an hautines in vs, that euery one wisheth to be lifted aboue his neighbours: yea, though he haue nothing in him why hee shoulde bée aduanced, to what outrage wil we growe when we be exalted? Behold them which are in the seate of iustice, they would beare themselues in hand, that the worlde were created onely for them, if God held them not backe by his spirit, and shewed them, that they ought not to oppresse them which are vnder their charge: but rather that it belongeth vnto them to execute the office of fathers, to holde their neighbours as their children: and that forasmuch as GOD hath so highly honoured them, they ought to walke in so much the

Iosue. 1. 9.
Heb. 13. 5.

greater humilitie. They which preache the worde of GOD, and haue charge to guide and conduct others, if they thinke they ought to bee exempted out of the common ranke, and despise others, woe come to them. For it were better they brake their necke going vp into the pulpit, if they take not paines themselues, first to walke after God, and to liue peaceably with their neighbours, and to shewe that they are sheepe of the flocke of our Lord Iesus Christ. Nowe, for al this it is true, that the riche may well bee serued of the poore sort, and when a man hireth men seruants and maides for his money, he wil not set his seruant aboue himselfe at the table, hee wil not haue him lye in the same bedde with him. Yet notwithstanding, though he haue some superioritie ouer him, yet ought we alwaies to beare in minde this point, that we are vnited togither as it were in one flesh, and that we are all formed to the ymage of God. If we consider that they, which are descended from the race of Adam, bee our flesh and our bone, this ought to frame vs to al gentlenesse, although wee are as brute and sauage beastes one set against another. When the Prophete Esay would put men in minde of their base estate, to induce them to relieue their poore brethren, he saith: Thou shalt not despise thine owne flesh. See where I ought to viewe, and beholde my selfe as in a looking glasse: namely, in as many creatures as are in the world. Marke wee this for one point. But yet there remaineth more, that is, that the ymage of God is imprinted in al men. Then I despise not onely mine owne flesh: when I shal oppresse any one, but I violate the ymage of God almuch as lyeth in mee. So then let vs diligently note, that God would in this place declare vnto them which are in authoritie, and credit, to them which are rich, & to such as bee in some degree of honour aboue others, that they ought not to abuse those which are vnder their handes, that they ought not to trouble and torment them aboue measure, that they ought alwayes to thinke on this, that wee are all descended from the line of Adam, that wee haue one common nature, that the ymage of GOD is imprinted in vs all. Loe, what wee haue to note, and aboue all other thinges to beare in minde, seeing Iesus Christ is descended hither belowe to bee made of no reputation, to condemne our pryde and loftinesse, and to shewe vs, that there is no way to serue GOD but in humilitie, and that

Esa. 58.7.

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hée hath made vs all members of his bodie, as well seruantes, as those whiche are maisters and superiours, shewing that there is no difference, when the question is of comming vnto GOD, and hauing respecte vnto him, and his seruice. We must therefore bée followers of him. And because wée are all, both small and great, members of his bodie, and that he is our head, there is great reason, that euerie one applie him selfe to his neighbours. And sithence GOD hath declared him selfe our father, in more familiar wise than hée did vnto them which liued vnder the Lawe, let vs bée so muche the more perswaded to maintaine a fraternitie and brotherhood among vs. And this haue wée further to beare in minde vppon this place. There resteth yet one pointe to be obserued touching this, that GOD hath ordeined a memoriall and remembraunce to the Iewes, that they were sometimes in Egypt as poore slaues and bondmen. Nowe wée knowe, that in that place they were euill and cruellie handled. But for that they then sighed and cried vnto God, and he heard them, for that they then desired to bée borne withall, and to bée released from some of their miserie, GOD sheweth that they ought also to doe the like. And this containeth a good and profitable doctrine: namelie, that when we looke into our selues, we may the better bée induced to acquite our selues of our dutie: and contrariwise, when wée become cruell towardes our neighbours, this is because wée are become drunken with our owne ease, and consider not the pouertie and miserie wée haue beene in, or happilie may come vnto. Hée which hath beene hungrie and thirstie, in such sort, that hée hath desired that some one would succour him in his necessitie, when hée seeth a poore man, and thinketh: Well, I haue beene in the like necessitie, when I could haue bene willing to bée aided and relieued: yea, mée thought some shoulde haue had pitie on mée to succour mée: he (I say) which thinketh of these thinges, when hée seeth a poore man in néede, shall hée not haue his hearte mollified and softened? But what? When wée are at our ease, there is no talke of remembring our néede and pouertie, but rather we imagine and suppose, that we are herein exempted, and not to bée numbered in the common araie of men. And that is the cause why wée forgette our selues, and take no pitie and compassion vppon our neighbours in any

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miserie they suffer. With so much greater hede then wee ought to beare in minde this place, wherein the Lord seeing vs so blinde, so giuen to the loue of our selues, so well contented to be plunged in our owne delightes & pleasures, so careless of them which endure penurie, & are in necessitie, expostulateth with vs in this wise: And what are you? Haue you neuer bene in any necessitie? And when you ouerflowe your bankes in your wicked dealinges against them, haue you no care to thinke: Behold, these creatures are formed to the image of God, if wee commyt any outrage against them, shal God take pitie of vs? Let vs then practise this doctrine in our whole life: and as often as wee shall see any oppressed with miserie, let vs remember to say, Goe to, haue not I bene in necessitie aswell as they? And if nowe I were in the same estate, would I not desire to be succoured? Seeing then it is so, ought wee to exempt our selues out of such a condition? At least let vs doe to an other as wee would that one shoulde doe vnto vs: for nature hath taught vs this, and wee nede not to goe to schole to learne it. Where shall nede then no other euidence to condemne vs, than this whiche our Lord hath alreadie shewen vs by experience. When wee shall beare in minde to commen thus with our owne heartes, without all doubt wee shall be touched with some pitie to helpe them which stande in nede and necessitie: and that we shalbe moued to compassion, seeing them endure miserie: so that if wee haue the power and abilitie to succour and relieue them, euerie one of vs will employ him selfe herein. Yee see then what wee haue to note vppon this place, when it is saide, Thou wast a straunger in the land of Egypt: It behoueth therefore, that nowe thou also ease them whiche are vnder thy hande: for when thou wast a seruant, thou couldest haue bene verie willing that one shoulde haue borne with thee, and released thee of some part of thy miserie. But nowe let vs come vnto them which were not of the people of God, but did onely traffike, and had entercourse of merchandize among them. GOD willeth that they also aswell obserue the rest: and yet they were not sanctified of GOD, and this signe coulde not apperteine vnto them (as wee haue alreadie saide.) It seemeth then that GOD vnhalloweth the sacrament, when he communicateth it vnto the vnfaithfull, and those which were not circumcized, to beare the marke and signe of the couenant, to them whiche had

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neither the lawe nor the promises. But we are to obserue, that this which God speaketh here of straungers, extendeth not to them only, and belongeth vnto this people which he had chosen & adopted. For we know that if things contrary to the seruice of God be permitted, although one shal happily say, These which offende, are not of our societie and companie, we shal notwithstanding be induced by their euil examples to folow them. If the straungers had beene permitted to labour among the people of the Iewes, what might haue happened hereby? The Iewes would haue had dealings with them, and so haue defiled themselues: they would haue made small difference betweene this day & others. For when examples are set before our eies, we are easily led away to that which is euil. And albeit there shoulde be no great occasion of turning vs aside, yet is our nature so inclined vnto euil, that we are easily induced hereunto. And how would wee resist the when we should be altogither drawē forward into wickednesse? Thus if liberty should haue bin permitted vnto straungers to labour, and to doe their businesse among the people of Israel, they would soone haue beene corrupted, euery one would haue dispensed with himselfe for this liberty to violate the Sabbaoth day, vtterly neglecting the obseruation therof. So then, to the ende all such occasion of transgressing against this rest, might be removed, and that this day might bee obserued with greater reuerence, as God willed that the beastes and cattel should rest: so commaundeth he that the straungers doe the like. Now this ought to serue for our instruction. For it is to teach vs, that vices ought not to be tolerated amōg those which make profession of Christianitie, but that men ought to punish the offenders: yea, though they be but straungers & wayfaring men. As how? When blasphemies are condemned among vs, if a man heare a stranger to blaspheme, to make a scorne of God, and yet hee suffer him and dissemble the matter, is not this to suffer a stinking sore to fester, to the corrupting and rotting of all the rest? See I say, what is done when blasphemers shal be so borne withal, when they shal haue their flote and ful saile in their wickednesse, and that men wil not represse them, albeit they be so open and manifest, that men may heare and see them. But it is too euident, that we are so far from punishing the blasphemies of them as they deserue, which are not of our religion: that it is to be seene how we suffer them in those, which are together among vs, & make profession of Christianity. And this

is to our greater confusiō. For when we suffer among vs either Papists or Iewes, or other like (as at this day the world is full stuffed with contemners of God) when we suffer them (I say) to raile on the doctrine of the Gospel, and to blaspheme the name of God, shall we not rēde vp so daungerous a disease, as after short time shalbe incurable and past al remedy? If we suffer wicked and dissolute straungers to make here an open sale of their outrages and dissolute behauiours, must it not needs bee that we bee drawen with them into the like wickednesse, and so be altogither corrupted? So then let vs diligently note, that God will haue his people exercised in such puritie, that not onely they which make profession of being Christians abstaine, and keepe themselues from euil, but also that they suffer not, as farre as shal lye in them, others among them, to liue inordinately. For we must remember that the earth is, as it were vnhallowed and defiled, when the seruice of God is defiled, and his holy name dishonored: the earth (I say) in the which by his pleasure we dwell, is defiled and accursed, or at least is nothing beholding vnto vs, if it be not. So then when God hath giuen this priuiledge to his childrē, that they may remoue al idolatry out of the land wherin they dwel, without al doubt if they doe it not, they shal prouoke the anger of God, and his vengeance vpon themselues. If nowe we would permit, that the abhominations of Popery should be mingled amōg vs, if by some special priuiledge one would graunt a masse to obstinate Papistes, which would liue here, if one would yeeld them some corner of the land to commit their idolatries and superstitions therein, can it be, but we should draw on vs the wrath and anger of God, & kindle the fire of his vengeance against vs? And why? Sithence God hath giuen to them which haue the sword of iustice in their hād and the administration therof, seing that he hath giuen them (I say) al power and authoritie to chace, and put away from out of the land al idolatries, and infections of Papistrie, certainly if they allowe and maintaine them, this shalbe euen to driue God away, that he dwel not, nor beare rule among them. So then let vs note, that not without great cause our Lorde would, that the straungers which dwelt among the people of Israel, although they were of an other fayth and religion, should be constrained to obserue the seuenth day. Not for any cause touching themselues, or for their instruction. For they were not capable hereof, but because they should not bee an occasion

casion of offence to draw the people into sin, and because the seruice of God should not be violated, and that the lande which he had giuen to his seruant Abraham for an inheritance, might be wholy dedicated vnto him. We are therefore hereby warned, not only to sanctifie our selues by Gods worde, but also not to suffer any disorder among vs, but that all such things be remoued cleane away. Now further note, that when our Lord will that we haue such a zeale to maintein his seruice, that euen they which professe not themselues to be of the Church, should be constrained to order & conforme themselues to vs when they line in our companie, that we shal want al excuse, if we on our part be not wholie giuen vnto him, & be as mirrors & spectacles to draw & allure the vnfaithful, & to win them vnto God. For if we, when they shal erre, wil reprehend them, & in the meane while they may perceiue the like or greater vices in vs, shal they not haue iust occasion to mocke & despise all our admonitions? So then, seeing it hath bene cõmanded, not to permit strangers to do things contrarie to the seruice of God, let vs know that we are in double maner cõmanded to walk warilie & in all carefulnes, & in such humilitie & sobrietie, that strangers may be cõpelled & forced to confesse, that our chief desire is willingly & vnfeignedly to honor God, & that we cannot suffer any reprochfully to abuse his maiestie. Thus ye se what we haue to beare in minde vpon this place, which we ought at this day with al diligence to obserue, albeit it be precisely giuen in commandement to the Iewes: for in substance & truth it belongeth vnto vs. For as in old time our Lord brought this people out of Egypt: so at this day hath he drawne vs out of the gulfe of hel, & hath deliuered vs from eternal death, & from those deepe and darke dungeons wherein we were plunged, to bring vs into his heauenly kingdome, hauing redeemed and purchased vs to him selfe by the blood of his welbeloued sonne our Lord Iesus Christ. Now let vs cast our selues downe before the face of our good God with acknowledging our faults praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done, that labouring to reforme our selues more & more to his iustice, wee fight daily against the lusts and desires of our flesh, and continue so long in this combate, vntill he hath fully freed vs from it, and reformed vs vnto his image, in the which we were first created. That he wil graunt this grace not only to vs, but to al people and nations of the earth, &c.

The 7. Sermon, wherein it is entreated of the second Table.

Deut. Chap. 5.

16 Honour thy father and thy mother, as the Lord thy God hath commaunded thee, that thy dayes may bee prolonged, and that it may be well with thee in the lande which the Lorde thy God giueth thee.

WE are now come vnto the second Table of the lawe, wherein God sheweth vs, how we ought all to line here together. For (as it hath beene aboue touched) there are three principall thinges required in our life. The one, that we serue God purely and sincerely: The other, that we liue with men in all integritie and vprightnesse, rendring vnto euerie one that which appertaineth and belongeth vnto him. Now as the honour of God is more excellent than al that which concerneth men, so it behoued that in the first and principall place, the rule of honouring God, as we ought, should be giuen. And this is handled & dispatched in the first Table. Here then God beginneth to declare vnto vs, in what sort our life ought to be ordred, if we will applie our selues vnto the dutie we ow vnto men. Now we haue also declared, that God requireth no honour of vs for any neede he hath of it, or for any profite it bringeth vnto him, but it is for our welfare and saluation, that he requireth it. So then he will proue our obedience, and the loue we beare him, when he commaundeth vs to walke in al equitie and vprightnesse with our neighbours, and that we liue together in such concord and fellowship, that any one be not giuen vnto himselfe, but that we communicate together, and that euerie one according to his abilitie and power to do well, employ and force himselfe thereunto. This, say I, is the proofe which God maketh, to knowe whether we worship him vnfeignedly and from our heart. For we might make many faire countenances, and ble great

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ceremonies, but God shall not content himselfe with it. And this is the cause why our Lord Jesus Christ saith, that the principall point of the law is iustice, iudgement, vprightnesse, faith, which word importeth here fidelitie or faithfulnesse. Therefore when we line with men without hypocrisie and dissimulation, whē we are not giuen to our subtile sleightes, nor malicious practises, wee studie to minister vnto, and to serue euerie one in his commoditie: we maintaine right, and resist wrong as much as lieth in vs: loe the chiefe principal part of the lawe. Not that the seruice of God ought in the meane while to be forgotten, or that it is of lesse importance, but because it is vnpossible, that men acquite themselues in their dutie toward their neighbours, except they be led hereunto by the feare of God. Nowe let vs handle this commaundement last recited, which concerneth the honouring of father and mother. And here, although expresly mention be made of the father and the mother, there is no doubt but GOD meant to deliuer a general doctrine, of hauing all superiorities in honour. For graunt we, which must needes be confessed, that the law conteineth a perfect rule of doctrine, wherein nothing is wanting: and this which we haue said, must needes be so. For if it hath not touched any thing of the dutie we owe to other superiours, as Princes and Magistrates, and those which haue the sworde of iustice: if it hath deliuered nothing concerning maisters, it should haue some default in it. Therefore we must conclude, that God hath commanded that all they which are in any degree of honour and authoritie be honoured and obeyed. Moreouer, seing al preeminence and superioritie commeth from God and that this order is established and appointed by him, without the which the world could not stande: what might be thought if God made no account of this, when he gaue forth a certeine forme of liuing well, and in all holinesse? Neither ought we to account it straunge, that vnder one speciall kinde of obedience to bee yelded to all superiours, the whole is comprised. For we haue alreadie touched, how this ought to be obserued in the law, and we shall see it more plainly hereafter. And this was not done, because God could speake in no other maner, but for our better profite and instruction. For we know, that albeit men desire to seeme subtile and sharp witted, yet cease they not alwayes to couer themselues with the buckler of ignorance. If we might espie that the law of God prelleth vs ouer lore, we wold feigne haue some excuse to exempt our selues from the

Mat. 23. 23.

ſubiection of it. And if the lawe of God were not apt and conuenient to inſtruct the rude and ignorant, many would alledge that they are no great Clerkes, that they neuer went to ſchole. It ſhoulde ſeeme thē, that the law of God might not bind them. But when we ſée that God abaſeth him ſelfe to our rudeneſſe, and that he ſpeaketh groſſely accoꝛding to our capacitie, this taketh from vs all excuſe, this remoueth all pꝛetences what ſoeuer: and euerie one is bound to oꝛder him ſelfe aright, and we al muſt confeſſe, that there is nothing which hindereth vs from doing our dueties, but that wée be rebellious againſt God, and wil not beare his yoke. Lo, why vnder one kind God compꝛehendeth the whole, that he might inſtruct & train vs vp like yong childꝛen, whiche are not capable noꝛ apt to be taught after ſome abſolute and perfect maner. This therfoꝛe is the true and natural ſenſe of the place, as we ſhall ſée hereafter. Foꝛ as God deliuered the ten commaundementes oꝛ woꝛdes, as he calleth them, ſo he annexed alſo the expoſition of them, to the end nothing might be obſcure, and that men might not doubt oꝛ diſpute of that which they had vnderſtode. We ſée then that God hath fully declared himſelfe, and ſhewed that not onely his will is we obey father and mother, but all ſuperiours without exception. And let vs note that God ſpeaketh here of honouring fathers and mothers, becauſe he would dꝛaw and allure vs by ſuche meanes as were moſt conuenient and agréeing with our nature. We knowe that there is ſuche pꝛide in men, that willingly they bende not the necke to be ſubiect to others. Euerie one thinketh he ought to bée a maiſter. Howe euer it be, it is hard foꝛ men to liue vnder, vntill God oꝛder them to this humilitie, to ſubmit themſelues in all ſimplicitie of obedience vnto them, which haue any authoꝛitie ouer them. God then ſéeing nothing moꝛe contrarie vnto our nature than ſubiection, that he might winne and allure vs hereunto after a moſt milde and louing maner, nameth in this commandement of obedience, the father and the mother. Now this is an execrable thing, and contrarie to all nature, if the childe foꝛget his dutie towards them, by whom he is come into this woꝛlde, & by whom he hath bene nouriſhed and ſuſteined. Therefoꝛe, when the childe knoweth not his father and mother, he is taken foꝛ a monſter, euery one holdeth him foꝛ execrable and accurſed. And why? Though GOD ſaieth nothing hereof, though wée had no holy Scripture to this purpoſe, though no man pꝛeached this vnto vs, nature hath al-

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readie taught vs, that this duetie which the child oweth to ỹ father & the mother, without detestable wickednesse cannot be broken off. We sée then the intent and meaning of our God: namely, that in proposing vnto vs the termes of father and mother, he might winne vs to himselfe, that we might not bée as wilde and vntamed horses, to draw backe, but should in all gentlenesse come vnto him, to receiue the subiection which he laieth vpon vs. And forasmuch as all authoritie which men haue, proceedeth from him (I speake of that which is according to lawful gouernement) let vs giue al diligence to yéeld him the honour which is due vnto him, and let euery one in his order obay them which haue superioritie ouer him, let euery one consider of his estate and condition, let children honour their father and mother, let al the people honour them which sit in the seate of iustice, let seruantes doe the like towardes their maisters. Briefly, let there bée an harmonie and consent of agréeing in duetie among vs, according to the order our Lorde hath appointed, which ought to bée inuiolable. Moreouer, when here is mention made of honoring, this is not that children onely vse some courteous embracing of their fathers and mothers, that they put of their hat before them, bend the knée vnto them: God staieth not himselfe on this, but the honor he requireth, importeth much more: namely, that children folow the counsel of their fathers and mothers, that they leaue themselues to bée gouerned by them, that they bestowe all payne to discharge themselues of their duetie towardes them: briefly, that the childe knowe hée is not at his owne libertie as long as hée hath father and mother. Yée sée in effect what God meant by this worde of honour. To proue this to be so, can we haue a better and more faithful expositor of the law, than the holy Ghost, which speaketh by the mouth of Moses, and of all the Prophetes: and namely, by Saint Paule? For we shal sée hereafter, that GOD hath declared the summarie and contentes of this sentence: namelie, that it sufficeth not that the children yeelde some reuerence to their fathers and mothers with cappe and knée, but that they bée subiect vnto them, and employ themselues to serue and obay them, as much as they shall bée able. And Saint Paule alledgeth not this, to exhort vs to some ceremony of duetie, but bee saieth: Let the children bee subiect to their fathers and mothers, where purposely he placeth this worde of subiection. So then wée sée, what this im- 1. Tim. 3. 4.

importeth, and what is the natural sense and meaning of the place. Now returne we to ý which we haue shortly touched, to make our profite thereby, and to gather thence some doctrine and instruction, which may be for our commoditie. First of al then, let children knowe, that seing God hath giuen them fathers & mothers, it is greate reason they obay them, or otherwise they shew, that they are conténers of GOD. And this rebellion they make, is not raised against men, nor against creatures: but this is as much as if the maiestie of God and his glory were troden vnder foote. It is said, that we haue but
Mat. 23. 9 one father which is in heauen, to speake properly: and this is not vnderstood concerning the soules onely, but touching the bodies also of men. This honor then is proper to God alone, to be called father, neither can it agrée vnto men, but so farre as it pleaseth him to communicate this name vnto them. Now seeing this title of father is as a marke which God hath imprinted in men, wee see, that if children make no account of fathers and mothers, they do wrong and iniurie vnto God. As much is to bée said of them which obay not their princes and magistrates: Of seruants likewise which would al degrées were confounded, and that they might beare rule without all order. And see why the Ethnikes and Painims haue applied this worde of Pietie or godlinesse, to the honour which we giue to fathers & mothers, and to al them which are in authoritie ouer vs. Piety or godlinesse, to speake properly, is the reuerence which wee owe vnto GOD. But the Painims, albeit they were poore blinde wretches, knew that God wil not be serued only in his own maiesty, but then also, when we obay those which beare rule and exercise authoritie ouer vs. In summe, he wil proue our obedience in this behalfe. And therefore, seeing parents and magistrates are lieftenants of GOD, and al those which haue any maistership represent his person: it is certaine, that if one set them at naught, it is as much as if hée declared that hée will not obay GOD. A man may make some fayre protestation to the contrary, but the thing notwithstanding is so for all that. If the poore vnfaythfull and vnbeléeuing ones knew this, and that GOD left vnto them such an affection, what excuse shal there be left for vs, if wee vnderstand it not much better? When we heare that all parentage or fatherhode procedeth from
Ephe. 3. 15 God (as Saint Paule pronounceth) and that by his vnion of Iesus Christ, we are put in minde hereof, haue we not a more expresse and manifest

manifest declaration of it: Must the Paynims be yet our doctors and teachers? But when they which name themselues Christians shall here bee ouerblinde, or shall stopp vp theyr eares not to heare and knowe that which God hath declared by poore ignorant wretches, woe bee vnto them: for their condemnation is so much more horrible and grieuous. Let vs therefore briefly note, that we cannot liue here together beneath, except this order which GOD hath ordeined, be holily kept and obserued: namely except those which haue superioritie bee had in honour, bee had in estimation, and bee obeyed. For without this, there shalbe an horrible confusion. All they then which cannot submit themselues vnto Magistrates, they which are rebellious to Fathers and to mothers, they which cannot beare the yoke of Maisters and Mistresses, declare sufficiently, that (as much as in them lieth) they peruert and ouerthrow all order of nature, that they mingle and confound the heauens with the earth, as wee say. For behold the only meane by which GOD would mainteyne and preserue mankind. Let vs adde further to that we haue said, the consideration of this which is elswhere mentioned, that when God sendeth Magistrates and Princes, he bringeth the feare of them, not only vpon men, but also on brute beastes. For so speaketh he hereof in Daniel: and of this we may gather that they which lift themselues vp against the rule of gouernment appointed by God, are worse than the brute beasts, & deserue to be sent to such a schole as theirs. For our Lorde, to make men ashamed which are reasonable creatures, saith: That the feare of Princes & Magistrates ought to bee extended euen to the brute beasts. May not a man then see that the diuell possesseth also them which cannot order themselues in all modesty to the subiection which God hath established, & without the which it must needs bee that al come to ruine & confusion in this worlde, as we haue already declared? Yes. And therefore if wee feele and perceiue in ourselues such an hautinesse as maketh vs worse subiects to them which beare rule ouer vs, let vs fight against this pride of ours, and let the authority of God suffice vs for a bridle. For were we more wild & sauage by nature, than we are, yet this ought (as I may so say) enchain and fetter vs herein, that God declareth that he is dishonoured by vs, except we do him homage in the persons of them, whom he hath placed in his roome, & in whom he hath imprinted his image. To speake briefly, we see that charity beginneth at this end, that we be humble

and modest, and that none lift vp themselues arrogãtly & presumptuously, that none estéeme of thẽselues aboue measure, but ẏ wee bee ready to hũble our selues, to the end we may bee ruled & gouerned in whatsoeuer it shal please God to require our obedience. Sée why in this sort S. Paul leadeth vs to charity, when he expoundeth this cõmandement of obaying magistrates. For he sheweth that if we haue not this mildnesse & gentlenes in vs, to bow the neck when our lord putteth on the yoke, we beare no charity towards our neighbors. If we desire such a confusiõ and medley in ẏ world, that we would that rulers & superiors haue no duty & reuerence done them, it must néeds come to passe that al be set out to the spoile of the robber, and it were much better that euery one liued apart and without cõpany, than in the society of men, to sée such a confusion as should be, if we kéepe not the rule of gouernment which God hath appointed. Let vs then wel remember, that to the end we may liue with our neighbors, it behoueth euery one to correct in himself this hautines and presumption, & not retaine and kéepe it in our harts. But let vs learne to be humble and lowly, knowing that this is to order and make our selues equal to thẽ of the lower sort (as S. Paule speaketh.) That we may so do, let vs consider our selues what we are. For behold what abuseth vs: euen this, that euery one would haue greater preeminence thã God hath giuen him, & being (as we are) blind, we forget our selues, and know not our own pouerty, our own faults & vices. Euery one wil thinke himself a maruelous man when he is nothing. And herehence issueth this, that we make no account of our neighbors: yea, that we despise al the vertues & good gifts which God shal haue bestowed on them. It is then spitefulnes and vnthãkfulnes which stirreth vs vp vnto pride, in such sorte, that euery one yéeldeth vnto himselfe more than appertaineth vnto him, & this is the cause why we cãnot frame our selues vnto obedience, as we ought. But in stéede of this let vs learne by our dutifulnes to doe homage vnto God, when we sée that he hath commanded vs to obay our superiours. And besides let vs know, that such as they are, he hath placed them ouer vs. If a childe haue a father or mother, he must not say: O, loe my father is not at al such a one as he ought to be, I haue iust cause to withdraw my selfe from his obedience: yea, but if he be thy father, it behoueth that this worde content thée, if thou wilt not abolishe and bring to naught the order of nature, either this which God hath ordained must be made

Rom. 13. 7.

Rom. 12. 16.

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of no value, or thou must honour thy father what a one soeuer he be. And whye? Because euen he which hath commaunded thee to honour thy father & thy mother, hath giuen thee such a father as thou hast. As much is to be said of maisters, of Princes, & all other superiours. For they came not at all aduenture or by chance, it is God, it is God which sendeth them, (as S. Paule hereof speaketh) as all the holie Scripture giueth sufficient testimonie. Rom. 13. 1. 2. 3. 4. Yea, precisely we are also ledde to know by experience the prouidence of God, & the fatherly care which he hath of vs, when he appointeth Magistrates. Let vs learne then wisely to consider Gods goodnesse in all those which are in superioritie ouer vs, that we may therby be moued to order our selues to their obedience. Thus ye see what we haue to beare in mind in this place. Now seeing it is so, that God hath comprised in a worde, & set downe vnto vs in a short summarie, the rule of obeying al superiours, let vs note, that by this he resigneth not his owne right, nor bereaueth him selfe of that which is proper & belonging vnto him. It behoueth therfore that God be honoured aboue all others: yea, and so, that the honour we yelde vnto mortall men hinder not, but that we giue him the seruice we owe him, and that euerie one studie to acquite his dutie principally towardes him. What not he (thinke you) discharge his duetie of obedience fairely, which obeyeth an vnder officer, & in the meane while spitteth in the face of the Iudge, or the Prince? What madnesse were in this? Now the like is done when we will debarre God of his preeminence, and so obey men, that we make no account of him which is aboue all. For this is against nature, that the authoritie which is giuen vnto men, should darken and diminish in any part the glorie of God. Let vs therefore diligently note, that when we are commanded to obey our superiours, there is alwayes this exception vnder it: so that this derogate nothing from the right which appertaineth vnto GOD: of which it hath beene alreadie handled in the first table. For we know, that the seruice by the which God is worshipped, ought to goe before all other thinges. And see why Saint Paule also, willing to giue vs the exposition of this place, expressly addeth, that the children ought to obey their fathers and mothers, howbeit in the Lorde. Eph. 6. 1. And we haue said, that the foundation whereupon we ought to builde, is, when we will be obedient, humble, and subiect to our superiours: namelie, to knowe that almightie GOD is represented in their persons.

Nowe take away the foundation, and must not the whole building totter and fall vnto the grounde? But all they which haue not respect vnto God, take away the foundation of this doctrine. So then the going forward is peruerse and wicked. Nowe this ought to admonishe aswell them which bee in authoritie, as those which are subiect vnto them. If then men and women haue children, they ought to knowe, that no subiection is due vnto them, except God beare rule aboue all. What is then behoouefull and necessarie to be done? It behoueth a father diligently to instruct and bring vp his children in the feare of God, and that he beginne himselfe to shew them the way herevnto. The mother must doe the like, that God may haue his honour aboue al, both small and great, old and young. Let Magistrates in like manner seeke by al meanes they may, that God be serued and honoured, let them maintein asmuch, as lieth in them, al that which apperteineth vnto this end: & sith he vouchsafeth to doe them this honour which they deserue not, to sit in the seate which is dedicated to his maiestie, & to carrie the sword, which as a thing sacred and holie apperteineth onelie vnto him: let them shewe that they are in deede his officers. Seeing then it is so, that he hath lifted them vp vnto such a dignitie, of which they were in no respect worthie, let them at least shewe this, that in his name it is, that they haue al authoritie, & that they referre it vnto him. Ye see then how Princes ought to discharge themselues of their duetie, euerie one ought to doe the like in his familie and houshold. Let those vnto whome God of his goodnesse hath graunted to haue men seruants & maides, consider wel that there is a Maister aboue them all, who ought so to be obeyed, that his right alwayes be reserued vnto him wholy & entirely. Loe what instruction al superiors, in what degree soeuer they be, ought to learne, the instruction, I say, which they are taught & commaunded of obedience to God. Moreouer, when fathers & mothers, & Magistrates will raise vp themselues against God, and be lifted vp with such tyrannie, as to challenge to themselues that which perteineth vnto God alone, whē they will turne vs from his obedience, yee see an exception which before we haue put downe, which maketh that they ought not to be obeyed. It behoueth therefore that God goe before, and then that the creatures followe after in their subalterne, as wee may say, that is their seuerall & successiue order. And in verie deede the cause why, for the most part, that meekenesse & humilitie is so little regarded in the

world,

world, that the children arme themselues against fathers & mothers, and behaue themselues as wilde beastes, that the people are full of wickednesse and rebellion, that seruantes also are full of disloyaltie and disobedience, that there is no dealing with any of these to reclaime them in what sort soeuer, is the iust punishment of God vpon them, which abuse the dignitie which he hath giuen them. For oftentimes wee see that the Princes beare not rule to magnifie and set forth the name and glorie of God, to cause that he bee honoured as he deserueth: but they drawe cleane backwarde herein, they will set vp and make themselues idols, euen to plucke God as it were out of his seate, to place themselues therein. One shall see this, at the least, one shal see the Princes reigne and beare rule licentiously, euen with all the raines of the bridle losed: and God therfore must needes reuenge himselfe of them. As for fathers and mothers what zeale haue they to instruct their children in the feare of God? All is one with them, so they may aduaunce and set them vp in the world: yea, it seemeth they are disposed to bring them vp in all impietie and vngodlines, in al contempt of God and of his word. If the fathers be wolues themselues, they would haue their children wolues whelpes: if they be old foxes, they would haue yong cubs to their children: if they be serpents themselues, they would haue also a serpents brode. We see this to be so. It is therefore good reason, that God aduenge himselfe, when the creatures so forget themselues, and especially, when men know not, & acknowledge that God hath stretched forth his hand to lift them vp, & to communicate vnto them part of his honour, euen in a degree right vnderneth him. It behoueth we beare this alwayes in mind. But what? Is not this a wicked & villanous vnthankfulnes, whē a man, which is in authoritie of iustice, knows not to say, Who am I? Loe I am a poore worme of the earth, & yet God vouchsafeth that I beare his name, as in his behalfe: withall, that I execute the authoritie which he hath giuen me. When a man forgetteth thus to reason with himselfe, is he not ouermuch vnthankful? Againe, when fathers consider not to say: Lo, God which is only father of al mankind, yet notwithstanding he yeldeth vnto me this so honorable a title, it is then great reason that I aduise my self wel to render an account hereof. When maisters & mistresses know not to thinke thus, We are no better than others, yet God hath honoured vs, not onely in creating vs after his owne image & likenes, but in giuing vs this

preeminence aboue them which are vnder our subiection, when I say men wil not know & thinke thus, must we not say, that they are become altogether brutish & beastlie? Let vs therefore diligently note, that rebellions often times proceede from them which are in authoritie, which know not their office: namely, that they ought aboue al to procure that God haue his honor, that he be serued, & worshipped, that men yeeld subiection & obedience vnto him. True it is, that the rebellious children, people, & seruants, shal not be excused for al this; but yet we see that this is a iust vengeance of God, & by so much the more we ought to be stirred vp to follow this which is declared vnto vs, both in this place, & in al the holie scripture, where this commandement is alledged. Let euerie one of vs then haue a respect vnto his vocation, and consider to discharge our duetie in our state & calling. Let them whom God hath honored so much, as to giue them the scepter of iustice, & to place them in his seate, take good heede they rule & exercise their authoritie in the name of God, & procure that he be serued and honoured of all; let them be as mirrours & spectacles to shew good example, let them hold their subiectes in such good awe, and rule them in such order, that the name of God be blessed, & the mouth of al euil speakers closed vp and stopped. Loe one point for them. Let fathers and mothers haue the care of wel instructing their children, let them studie to make them to knowe God for their onelie father: and touching their men seruantes and maides, let them so serue themselues with them, that God haue alwayes the principal place. Let them not doe, as accustomably men are woont, who, so they be serued to their owne profite and contentation, care not if God be forgotten. But let maisters know that God must beare rule ouer them: as also ouer those, which are vnder their subiection. And this is spoken and noted touching them which are in authoritie. Now on our part let vs cōsider, that when we haue Magistrates set ouer vs, if we be rebellious, if we presume to arme our selues against the rule of gouernmēt, if we seeke to subuert the order which God hath set, that wee commit not this outrage against men onelie, but that we assaile & bidde battell vnto God. And what can we winne by warring with him? Can we bee the stronger in this conflict? No: but he will reuenge himselfe without striking any blowe, so that we shalbe astonished to beholde how he shall mainteine that which by his owne mouth he hath ordeined, euen by a power admirable and wonderfull. Thus much

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touching the first point. And againe, let children also consider and take heede they be not ouer arrogant and presumptuous, they be not headstrong & giuen to their lustes and appetites: but that they order themselues quietly to the obedience of their fathers, knowing that they are in cōbate against god, when they cannot subiect themselues vnder the yoke which God putteth vpon them. Let men seruants & maides know, that if they refuse to be subiect vnto men whom they serue, that God is therby offended, and that they in the ende shall bee found guilty of so great a fault as this, that they would not be gouerned by his hand. Now in the meane time let vs note, that God must be obayed first of all, that the people so obay their princes and magistrates, that this derogate & take away nothing from ẏ right which God reserueth vnto himself, as he is also worthy therof. If Princes wil induce vs to doe euill, if they wil ouerthrow the pure doctrine of God (as we see ouermuch in the world that this fury and madnes is in many, which would haue religion bended at their lust, making it but an image of wax, which would haue the seruice and worship of God ordered according to their fantasies) it pleaseth not god that we be obedient vnto them in that behalfe. For who are they? They haue lost all authoritie when they reuolt from the obedience of him, who hath the chiefe and squereigne empire. Must the Diuels bee forced to bend the knee before God, & our Lord Iesus Christ, and shal there be men found which would vsurpe such maistership, that in the meane time the honour of God shal bee ouerthrowen, and all religion cast downe to the ground? So then let vs learne so to obey both Princes, fathers, and mothers, that God retaine his entier right, fully & wholy: and that we be not hindered, to yeld him the honor which appertaineth vnto him: but as farre as we may, without wounding our cōscience, we must obay them in al quietnes. And though they which haue authority ouer vs, acquite not themselues of their dutie: yet we owe them obedience, so that the children ought not dispitefully to behaue themselues, when their fathers shalbe ouer sharp & bitter vnto them, & shal exercise too great rigor against them. True it is, that fathers are forbidden to vse crueltie against their children: yea, forbidden to discourage them. But yet, although the fathers consider not to gouerne their children by gentlenesse: yet ought the children to beare with it patiently. Briefly, wee ought to beare the iniuries quietly and patiently of all those which haue authoritie ouer vs.

Phil. 2. 11

Ephes. 6. 4

And

And thus ye se what God would geue vs to vnderstand in this commandement. Now he addeth also the promise: That thy dayes, saith he, may be prolonged, & that thou maist prosper vpon the land which the Lorde thy God geueth thee. But there resteth yet a clause in the commaundement, which for that we are hardly ordered to humility, God placeth for a spurre to quicken vs forward, saying: Thy God commaundeth thee this. And it serueth to the confirmation of the doctrine we haue aboue touched: namely, that these shalbe vain & friuolous shifts, to call into question, whether they which are in degree of honour aboue vs, deserue so or no: whether they discharge their duty in that office & authoritie wherevnto they are called, all this shifting to excuse our disobedience must be layd aside. And why? For we must content our selues with this, which God hath appointed, we must rest altogether vpon his good pleasure.

Now for what cause Moses here addeth in expresse termes, The eternall or everliuing, thy GOD hath so commaunded thee: As if he did say: True it is, that men will kicke and fling, when they shalbe rained with any bridle of obedience, and shall neuer haue their good will and leaue, to haue them in subiection. Against their pride and arrogancie alwayes serueth them vp to ye desire of lifting themselues ouer high. So then there shall bee no voluntary subiection, before God begynne to worke, and to put thereunto his hande. But will you be rebellious vnto God (saith he) when you enter into these disputes? Must he beare rule ouer me? And must I obey him, when he is no better than I? If you so enuie at men, see, God opposeth himselfe, and he will know whether he shalbe obeyed & serued of you or no. And when he sendeth you his Lieftenants, & you will not receiue thē, it is a sure & certein signe, that you refuse also his yoke, in such wise, that his office is violated, & he perceiueth that he is dispitefully entreated of you. Sithence it is so, know ye (saith Moses) that the children which are rebellious to fathers & mothers, shal haue happily to alledge this or that: and the people which are occasions of seditions and troubles, shal wel haue some faire tale for their defence, but this shall serue thē to no purpose. And why? Because that God, which hath established roles and superiorities in the world, will also that we maintein thē. He hath pronounced the sentence herein, which cannot be called back & retracted. When God hath geuen forth his ordinance & decree, we must make no question of our duty, but rest therin, & haue our mouthes

stopped.

stopped. Now besides all this, our Lord vseth much goodnesse & kindnesse towardes vs, to winne vs the better to our dutie, & to allure vs to obey our superiours, when he adioyneth in the end a speciall promise. It is true, that we haue aboue seene, that God sheweth mercy in a thousande generations vpon them which loue him: and this was annexed vnto the commandement, where God declared vnto vs, that hee would his seruice shoulde bee kept in all puritie, that wee decline not to idolatrie and superstition. But the promise which is there, is extended to the whole Lawe, as wee haue seene: but this is belonging only to the commandement of obeying of fathers and mothers. Therfore when wee see that this is a Sacrifice agreeable vnto God, let those that are vnder subiection holde themselues therein, let them not shew themselues outragious & rebellious, but let thē bende their necke to be ordered in all obedience, and let them shewe that in deede they are willing to yeelde obedience vnto God: forasmuche as they refuse not to bee subiect vnto mortal men, whome hee hath sent and set ouer them in his owne name. Yee see then to what purpose this promise is giuen: namely, that God seeing howe harde and dul we are at spurre, woulde heereby mollifie our heartes, and winne vs by all mildenesse and gentlenesse, that we take it not in euill part to bee in subiection, and that it seeme not an harde and greeuous thing vnto vs to obey our Superiours. But because the whole cannot nowe be dispatched, let vs briefly beare in minde, that for to serue God the better, wee must beate downe all pride and presumption which is in vs. And albeit by nature we haue this cursed roote of desire to be lifted vp aboue others, though ambition reigneth both in small and great: yet ought we notwithstanding for preparing of our selues to the seruice of God, remoue this wholy from vs. And why? Because humilitie is the first and principal step to all true obedience. Now touching men, let vs note well, that we cannot liue together in vnitie and concorde, except they whom God hath placed in dignitie and authoritie be obeied, except they be receiued in his name, except men be subiect vnto them. Otherwise it must needes come to passe, that all order and pollicie being peruerted and ouerthrowne, our condition become worse then the state of bruite and sauage beasts amidst the wilde Forrestes. And so all they which are rebels, and resist lawfull authoritie, are enimies of GOD, of nature, and of all mankinde: these are monsters, whome we ought to abhorre and

deteſt. Now when we ſhall haue ſhewed our obedience in ſubiecting our ſelues vnto them, whom God hath ſet ouer vs, let vs learne alſo, that we haue great reaſon to humble our ſelues vnder him, and that in ſuch ſort, that hée bée ſerued and worſhipped of vs, not by Ceremonies, but in trueth, and in a pure conſcience, with the honour which apperteineth to him. And héereunto are wée led by all the rules and principalities in the worlde, knowing that God ought to haue his authoritie and preeminence ſo farre aboue them, as his ſeate aboue the heauens, is higher than theirs vpon the earth. So then, as wee are to remember that the children muſt obey their fathers and mothers, that the people muſt yéeld all duetiful ſubiection to their Magiſtrates, that in euery family and houſholde, ſuche order as God hath eſtabliſhed, muſt bée obſerued: as he wil there be ſuch degrees among men; ſo let vs beare in minde, that this ought to draiwe vs higher: namely, to knowe that God, who hath ſouereigne empire and authoritie ouer the worlde, ought to beare rule ouer all creatures; briefly, ouer our whole life. And by ſo much the more wée ſée how this curſed Papaſie ought to be deteſted of vs. For ſée there an hautie empire lifted vp ouer the whole worlde, but to what other ende, than to thruſt God beſide his throne, and to bereaue him of the honour which perteineth vnto him? For the Pope will readily alleadge vs that men ought to bée ſubiect to their ſuperiours. But what? Maketh hée any account either of the order of God, or of nature? None at all, but contrariwiſe, ſpitefully raging againſt all authoritie of holy Scripture, hée ouerthroweth all order and rule of pollicie, which God hath commaunded vs. Hée will call himſelfe, The vicar of Ieſus Chriſt: and yet wée ſée howe hée pluckéth God out of his throne, and will not ſuffer him to bée head of the Church. Let vs therefore learne to haue in deteſtation this rule and authoritie, which the Deuil hath ſet vp in this worlde, oppoſite altogether and cleane contrarye to that which God hath commanded. And in the meane time, albeit wée ſée that thinges haue not the courſe they ought to haue, ſo that ſuperiours abuſe their power, let vs knowe, that they cannot peruert and take away this, which GOD hath inſtituted, concerning empires and kingdomes. As for the authoritie of iuſtice, it muſt bée maintained and preſerued; for it hath his fundation of God: it is not with it as with this diuiliſh Papaſie, which had no fundation: but let vs knowe that God will alwayes haue in this worlde Kinges, Princes, and

ouer Iustitiaries. This order therefore must bee kept and obserued and when they acquite not themselues of their duetie, when fathers shall vse tyranny towards their children, let vs bewayle our selues, being certainly perswaded, that this proceedeth from our sinnes: & when God suffereth, that the order which hee hath instituted bee not obserued, but that all is confused and disordered, let vs knowe, that with so much greater diligence we ought to haue recourse vnto him, praying him that hee will restore things to such an estate, that al may so that wee desire no other thing than to bee gouerned by him, as by the which meane hee procureth our saluation.

Now let vs fall our selues downe before the face of our God, with acknowledging of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better that wee haue done, to the ende that in true repentance wee learne to displease ourselues for to returne vnto him, profiting heerein daily more and more, vntill the time, that being ridde of all our vices, we be fully reformed vnto his iustice. And so let vs all say, Almightie God, &c.

The 8. Sermon.

Deut. Chap. 5.

17 Thou shalt doe no murder.

WE haue already seene, how for the better ordering of our life with men, we ought to yeelde obedience to those which haue any superioritie ouer vs. For this is the first thing which GOD commaundeth vs in the second table of the lawe: and euen comming from him selfe vnto men, hee placeth this as the meane betweene both, to honor them, whom he hath appointed ouer vs. It is true, that when we speake of men, we vnderstand some like and equal fellowship. For wee are all descended from the stocke of Adam, wee are of the same nature, and all this importeth that men are of like equalitie. But this notwithstanding, seeing it hath pleased Almightie GOD, to appoint certaine degrees, wee must returne vnto

this point, and obserue this order, that hee which hath anye preheminence, be so esteemed and accounted of amongst men. And wee ought not heere to make this allegation; Why? Is hee better than I? For this difference of degrees proceedeth not from this, that one is better than another: but this is, because it pleaseth God to giue preeminence vnto some, whome hee will also haue honored. Now this is not sufficient that children honor their fathers by bearing some reuerence to them: but they must succour them, they must employ themselues for their behoofe and commoditie, as much as shalbe possible. And in very deede Iesus Christ sheweth that there is nothing but meere hypocrisie, when the children shall onely make some signe of loue & honour to fathers and mothers, and in the meane while leaue them helpelesse in neede and necessitie. This is to defraude parents of their right, this is to mocke the lawe of God, when men will so obserue it by way of outward Ceremonies. As much is to be saide of all subiection. For it is required that we make not some signe only of honor, but that we render all the right of dutifulnesse which appertaineth vnto him, which is in any preheminence aboue vs: yea, and that wee doe this of our owne accorde and good will. Men truely would be exempted from all kinde of bondage and subiection: but seeing God hath ordeined so diuers an order, we must frame our selues thereunto, and that not by force and constraint. For what account shalbe made of this, if wee obey God in despite of our teeth, and our hearte driue alwayes the contrary way and draw cleane backwarde? Our will therefore must bee present in this behalfe, and we must account it as sweete and pleasant, whatsoeuer our Lorde hath commaunded vs. You see then wherein consisteth the first step and degree of honest and vpright walking with men: namely, that we knowe, that fathers and mothers, and all others which are lifted vp to any dignitie aboue vs, must haue the honour and obedience which appertaineth vnto them, otherwise God is dishonored in their persons: and this is as much, as if we refused to doe him homage, & to yeeld our selues subiect to him. Now in the next place after this first commandement, Moses addeth, That we cõmit no murder. It is true, that at the first sight it would seeme, God should not prescribe vs no great perfection in forbidding vs murders. But we haue to note that God would comprise in some short sentence, all that which were requisite to the well ordering of our whole life. And therefore it was not for him to forget or

Mar. 7. 11.

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leaue any thing behinde. Now we must knowe, that the life of men shall then bee well ordered, when they abstaine from doing of euill, from all wrong and violence: againe, when they walke honestly, in all chastitie, when they doe no hurt one to another, when they shall keepe their tongues also from harming their neighbours, by lying, or any slaunderous speaking. All these good properties ought to bee in vs, if wee will conforme our selues to the will and iustice of God. So then wee ought not to maruell that God speaketh heere expressly of murders. For this is the better to bridle vs, that wee presume not to commit any outrage, or attempt any way to harme our neighbours. But for all this, let vs beare in minde, that which before wee haue touched: namely, that God hath spoken after a grosse and rude manner, to apply himselfe to all sortes of men, and to bee vnderstood euen of the most idiots. For wee see howe euery one excuseth himselfe of ignorance: and if a thing be somwhat hard and obscure, it seemeth to vs, that wee may wash our handes as innocent and guiltlesse, if we shall haue failed in our duetie: and if wee can say, Oh this was ouer high, and too profound for mee, and I could neuer come to any vnderstanding of the matter: we think all is cocksure. To the end therfore that men might no longer haue such shiftes, God would speake in suche sort, that euen little children might vnderstande what he saith. This is the cause, why in so shorte and plaine wise hee sayeth, Thou shalt doe no murder. Moreouer, let vs note, that God to bring vs by little and little to liue well, proposeth vnto vs these thinges, which are most detestable, & most to be abhorred: y we might learne thereby to take heede of doing euill. For example in this place, he might well haue sayde: Yee shal do no iniurie, yee shal vse no violence with your neighbours. He might wel haue spoken thus. But hee would rather speake in this place of murder. And why? Because this is a thing contrary to nature, when men aduaunce themselues to defate the image of God. Wee must then needes haue murders in horror and detestation, except we be altogether brutish and beastly. How euer it bee, this teacheth vs, that the thing is ouer enormious and outragious, and which wee ought to detest and haue in execration, which is as murder. God therefore to the end he might hold vs in more strong and sure bondes, and the better to withdraw vs from all harme doeing, and from all wrong and iniurie, sheweth vs that wee ought not to pollute and defile our handes in the blood of our neighbours.

bours. Well then: when one abstaineth from murder, is this all which is required? Nay, there wanteth yet very much as anon shall appeare, when wee haue more fully declared this matter. For God will hold both our heartes, and our thoughts in subiection, he will be serued in such pure and sincere manner, that wee nourish within vs no euill will against our neighbours. Therfore, when he speaketh of murder, it is as if hee saide: Marke yee, and be heedefull in this matter: If you had not the written law, if you were altogether as the Painims: yet should you haue this imprinted in your heartes, that murder is a thing wicked and detestable. Now I declare to you, that I holde and condemne for murderers all those which cõmit any outrage against their neighbours, all those which deuise any thing against them, all those which nourish within their heartes hatred and rancor. Loe howe God interpreteth himselfe. Nowe let vs diligently note, that not without great cause, our Lorde hath forbidden suche murders. And why? Because we cannot dwell with men, but in abstaining from all iniurie and violence. Howbeit, vnder one special kinde, hee hath forbidden the whole. And why? For if hee had vsed many wordes, and made some long discourse, one might haue saide: I remember not so long a lesson, and it was too hard for me. Loe why God woulde speake in one worde, euen to the end his doctrine might by and by be learned, and that his lawe might easily be imprinted in memorie. We neede not turne ouer many leaues, wee need not haue any great registers, and volumes: this sufficeth, that God hath in ten wordes comprised the rule of well liuing. What shall hee nowe bee which may alledge, and say: I haue forgotten such an article, I haue not vnderstood it? For can we not beare in minde ten wordes? Wee see then now, how God would hold them conuicted of shamelesnesse, when they haue not wel vnderstode that, which they ought to doe. Yee see then why God hath spoken after so briefe and short a maner. Moreouer, hee hath so chewed these thinges, as the Prouerbe is, that digesting of them, wee might learne to order our selues peaceably to him: yea, that the most idiots might knowe, that it needeth not to bee any great Clarke to vnderstande the lawe of God, seeing hee hath descended so low, and framed him selfe so to our capacitie, that there is no poore wretch so ignorant, which may not comprehende and vnderstande that which is conteined in the lawe. Loe,

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what wee haue briefly to beare in minde. Now seeing it is so, that God hath forbidden murder as a wicked and detestable thing, wee haue to knowe first of all, that hee which lifteth himselfe vp to kill and murder his neighbours, is not worthie to bee nourished on the earth, as being worse natured than the bruite beastes. For wee see howe the Beares, the Lions, and other wild and sauage beasts, spare those which are of their owne kinde, and are like themselues. And why? Although they want all reason to discerne good from euil, albeit they haue neither law nor equitie: yet notwithstanding, euen this acknowledging of a common and like nature betweene themselues, withholdeth them from all crueltie. Shall then the bruite beastes knowe well, how to liue without hurting of their owne kinde: and shall it not be an ouer great shame, that men may not be withholde by some consideration, seeing that GOD hath imprinted in their heartes, how wicked and execrable a thing murder is? They see they are all of the same nature, euery one doth behold the image of God in his neighbour, and should not this serue them for a bridle to withholde them from all violence and wrong doing? Whither might our furie further leade vs?

So then let vs remember, that albeit God had not spoken, wee are already conuicted by the testimonie of our owne conscience, That who so armeth himselfe against his neighbour, despiseth nature, and is not worthie to bee accounted in the number of men. But now, sith the authoritie of God is matched with that, which alreadie we know by the guide and direction of nature: and seeing hee sheweth vs, that the bloud of men cannot bee shed, but we shal bee accountable thereof vnto him: when wee heare this, let vs learne to walke without iniuring of any: or otherwise let vs knowe, that God will bee our mortall enimie, as hauing alreadie declared, that all men are vnder his garde and protection. It is true, that this threate is not heere expressed: but it is sufficient, that hee hath spoken hereof in other places. For when hee saith: That man is created to the image of God, it is not lawfull to make any assault vpon him. For it is as much, as if our Lorde did say, You wage battell with mee, when you doe thus seeke to hurt one another. For I haue imprinted mine image & likenesse in you. *Gen. 1. 17*

If one deface the armes of some Prince, it is an iniurie so

so great, that it shalbe reuenged and punished as murder. And why? For this in like sort tendeth to the confusion of all order and pollicie. But we, the image of God, which is imprinted in men, and one despiseth it: must not such an outragious villaine bee double punished? So then note we, that God, in declaring that it is against him that men arme them selues, when they doe iniurie to men, woulde shew vs, that this ought to withholde vs from doing them wrong, except wee bee bereaued of all sense, & become mad & furious. And further, to the end wee might better aduise our selues in this thing, our Lorde declareth, there cannot be a murder committed, but the earth therewith must needes bee polluted and defiled. As it is handeled hereof in an other place, where it is saide. That the effusion of mans blood in it selfe importeth a filth, and vncleannesse, and such a blot, which scarse can be wiped out. When mention is made of killing, euen in a battel allowed and approued, yet is it saide: That a man thereby is become vncleane. And why? Because wee might learne thereby, to haue in greater horror and detestation the effusion of blood. If an enimie be killed in open battell, although God pardon this, because hee which slayeth him hath iust and lawfull cause thereof, and doth it for necessitie: yet notwithstanding it is said, That the man which hath slaine him, is polluted and made vncleane. And why? To the end we might knowe, that God hath created vs to liue together in peace, and that wee cannot giue one philopp (as they say) but that wee defile our selues, and wee become by and by vncleane before the face of God. Therefore, when the holy scripture vseth all these formes of speaking, ought wee not so much the better be witholden from doing of iniurie to any of our neighbours? Yes verily. Now withall, seeing God hath handeled these thinges according to our rudenesse and infirmitie, let vs note, that albeit wee shed not blood: yet this sufficeth not, except wee abstaine from all outragious and violent dealing. Briefly, let vs vnderstande, that the persons of men must bee accounted deare and precious in our eyes. For, vntil wee be come to such perfection, GOD shall alwaies account vs for murderers. If any one strike his neighbour, albeit hee slay him not, loe hee is already a murderer before God. And why? Wee haue alreadie saide, that God hath purposely vsed that worde, to the ende hee might declare to vs, that how euer we esteeme them as light and little faultes, to bee the occasion of tumultes, and seditions, to haue giuen some crosse blowe,

Num 35. 33.
1. Chr. 22 8.

blowe, that hee notwithstanding shall not account so of these things, as wee doe. Wherefore: They are all as weightie as murder. Yee see then why God hath thus spoken. Therefore, as he hath forbidden vs murder: so let vs knowe, that he hath interdicted vs to doe any iniurie, or vse any violence towardes our neighbours. When we haue done nothing, but lifted vp our dagger against any one, and haue touched him in anger and indignation, behold a murder is committed in the sight of God. If wee woulde well consider of this, should wee not bee much more sober in our dealinges than wee are? We shal see some so cholerike, that if one displease them, but with a worde, loe forthwith the dagger is drawen to strike and to beate him. For it seemeth vnto them, that so there be no blood drawen, the matter is not great: but howe easie soeuer they be in their iudgementes, the sentence of God can not bee retracted, when he declareth, That all murders are mutinies and seditions, and all mutinies murders. So then let vs learne to laie aside our owne fantasies, when we wil be iudges of our owne faults, & let vs quietly and peaceably receiue the sentence which God hath giuen: and knowe we, that all those which violentlie attempt any thing against their neighbours, are alreadie guiltie of murder before God. Loe what we haue briefly to beare in minde. But now, to make a triall whether we abstaine from all harme doing, from committing any outrage against the persons of our neighbours, wee must come to the examining of our heartes and secrete thoughtes. For God hath not giuen some ciuil lawe onely, to cause vs to liue honestly: but he hath giuen a lawe conuenient and agreeable to his own nature. We knowe that he is a spirit, & wil be worshipped in spirite and troeth. Seeing it is so, it behoueth vs to knowe, that he hath prescribed a rule, not only for our handes & feete, but for our thoughtes also & affections. It is true, that men, as they are carnall, when first the lawe of God is pronounced to them, they thinke they haue well acquited themselues, when they are faultlesse before the worlde. On the other side, they are verie readie, by enlarging their conscience, to dispense with themselues, and to take all libertie of doing euill. And this is the cause why euen the Iewes, which ought to haue bene nourished from their infancie in the lawe of GOD, they take this commaundement, Thou shalt not kill, ouer grossely, vnderstanding that they offended not GOD in this point, if so be they had not openlie set on their neighbour, to wound *Iohn. 4. 24.* *Mat. 5. 21.*

and to hurte him. Therefore, except the fault were euident and apparant to the eyes of men, it seemed vnto them that it ought not to bée imputed vnto them before the face of GOD. But our Lorde Iesus reprooueth them of this, shewing them, that the lawe is spirituall, and expounded of them verie sottishlie. When it is saide, Thou shalt not kill: you thinke (saieth he) that you shalbe absolued as guiltlesse before GOD, when men can not bring you to the barre for it: But I tell you, that whosoeuer shall call his neighbour Fole: that is to say, doeth but declare any token of indignation against him, is worthie to bée punished with hell fire: Whosoeuer iniurieth an other, is culpable of a Councel and constitution from heauen, so that GOD and all his Angelles shall arme them selues against him: Whosoeuer murmureth against his neighbour, who so muttereth and grummeleth (I knowe not what) betweene his teeth: although he doe not open iniurie, is in daunger of iudgement. Wée see to what point our Lorde Iesus leadeth vs: namelie, to shewe that albeit we shalbée able to protest, that wée haue committed no outrage, that wée haue not lifted vp our fist to giue one blowe, much lesse drawen our swoorde against our neighbour, and that wée haue not wounded him, that yet this is not enough: But know yée, saith hée, that GOD will beare rule ouer your tongues, ouer your thoughtes, and ouer all your affections, as by good reason he ought. Seeing it is so, whosoeuer shall haue spoken euill of his neighbour, the same is alreadie a murderer: for the tongue is as a sharpe swoorde. Therefore, albeit you shoulde haue neither swoord nor dagger to strike withall, when the tongue is so armed, to speake euil against your neighbours, when you abuse their persons, it is a kinde of murder in the sight and iudgement of GOD: and although you haue done no open and manifest iniurie, yet thinke yée not to bée quited for all this: for when you shall haue but muttered and mumbled something betweene your lippes against them, it sufficeth to make you culpable and guiltie before GOD, you shalbe condemned from the highe throne of the heauens, albeit you bée absolued before men, and that earthlie iudgement proceede not against you. When we heare this, let vs knowe, that it is hée, whome GOD the father hath giuen to iudge the worlde, who

who speaketh vnto vs. We ought not therefore here to dispense more largely with our selues: for we shall gayne nothing by all our cauilling shiftes: but let vs learne to haue respect alwayes vnto GOD, to haue a right and true exposition of the lawe. For what is he which speaketh? He which beareth rule ouer our hearts and thoughtes, he which will not be serued of vs with eye seruice, he which is not contented that before men we abstayne from doing of euill, but will be worshipped in spirite and in trueth: who will haue that our consciences be chaste and pure, that we be purged from al wickednesse. Thus when we shall haue respect vnto the nature of GOD, we must no longer extend the law of GOD to the outward workes: but we ought to conclude, that when God speaketh of murders, he vnderstandeth al enimity, he speaketh of all anger and indignation, of all rancour and malice against our neighbours. And indeede, that is the very cause, why expressly Saint John saith, that he which hateth his brother in his hearte, is a manslear. As if he did say: You may make many fayre countenances, but albeit the hatreds you conceiue, be very hidden and secret, and that you dissemble so deepely, that you shewe no token of malice agaynst your neighbours: think ye not for all this, that God hath his eyes shutte and closed vppe. Well it may be hidden and priuie from men, which you haue not made open and manifest: but when you hated your neighbours in your heartes, that is to say, most secretely, in suche sorte, that none be able to perceiue it: yet loe notwithstanding a murder committed before GOD. And in very deede, the reason of this, is most euident and manifest. It is true, that when the Princes and Magistrates of this worlde make lawes, it is not after the manner and fashion of GOD: but to this ende onelie, that euery one rule and gouerne himselfe according to outwarde order and pollicie, that none be openly iniuried, but that euery one haue his right, and that peace and concord be maintained among men. 1. Pet. 4. 5. 1. Iohn. 3. 15.

That is the intent and meaning of Magistrates, when they make their lawes. And why? They are mortall men, they cannot reforme the inwarde and hidden affections: this appertayneth vnto GOD, they sounde not the heart: for this is the proper office of GOD, as the holie Scripture attri- Acts. 1. 24.

buteth it vnto him. But yet this notwithstanding, when a ciuil lawe is made, although one shedde not one droppe of blood: yet is hee adiudged worthy to bee led to the gallowes, if it shall bee knowen and proued, that he endeuoured with al his might to haue murdered one. If a man hath drawne his sworde vppon one who wardeth off the blowes, in such sort, that he touched not his skin: yet notwithstanding, the lawes, euen of the Painims, condemne such a man to the gibbet, as well worthie thereof. And why? For the lawe regardeth not what is happened, but respecteth the counsell and purpose of men. Seeing then earthly Princes and Magistrates punishe him, which endeoureth with all his might to doe euill, although being hindered, he bee not come to the full ende of his enterprise, what shalbe thought of God? Shal hee haue lesse authoritie than a mortall creature? Beholde (I say) to what point we ought to come, if wee will knowe, that of good right GOD condemneth all them, which hate their neighbours. And why? Consider wee (I say) what his nature is. Will wee therefore obserue this commaundement? Wee must begin in short and summary wise with murder. And why? For God would haue vs preuented and forestalled with some fright and horror, that when wee thinke of hurting our neighbors, of committing any violence, of doing any iniury, wee remember that this is an horrible and detestable thing, which he can by no meanes bee able to suffer. And why? Because this is a kinde of murder. See then howe GOD at the first would daunt vs, and this is the point whereat wee ought to beginne. And if we thinke it a straunge thing, that God condemneth one bare on the eare for murder: nay, one verball iniurie, as wee may terme it, which is done but in a word: yea, one wayward grudging, be it neuer so secretely hidden within vs, if wee account it strange, that this bee condemned as murder before God, let vs consider what his nature is, and that he deserueth to haue more yeelded vnto him than vnto mortall men. But earthly Iudges punish an euill and wicked affection, when it sheweth it selfe: what shall then God doe, vnto whom nothing is hidden? And agayne, we haue to note that, which the Apostle saith in the Epistle to the Hebrewes, That the worde of GOD resembleth him which is the Authour thereof, so that it must bee as a two edged sworde, which pearceth euen to the marrowe of the bones, that there is no thought in vs which it searcheth not. And why? For nothing is hidden in

Heb. 4. 12

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the presence of God. Seeing it is so, that nothing is hidden before God, it behoueth that this worde prone and sound the depth of our hearties. So then it is necessarie, that all that which is secrets and vnknowē vnto men, come into account before God: and by this we be admonished to walke in such sort, that wee beare no enimitie nor euil will vnto our neighbours. But yet notwithstanding, wee must proceede further. For this is not ynough, that men abstaine from doing of euil, seeing they are created to aide and helpe one another, and to maintaine and defende one another. God therefore, in forbidding of murders, sheweth on the contrary side, that the life of our neighbors ought to be deare vnto vs, that wee ought to employ all our trauell and paine, to preserue and maintaine it, as much as in vs lieth. But he would begin at the negatiue point, the better to declare vnto vs, that which he commandeth. And why? For we see how vicious and wicked we are: as many thoughts as are in vs, so many thornes and briers are there within vs: as many affections as wee haue, so many brambles and thistles, and such like things growe in vs. God therefore, not without great cause, would plucke out of our hearties, and out of our thoughtes, the wickednesse and the vice wherewith they are ouergrowen: yea he would correct euery euil and corrupt part of vs. For without this, it is not possible to moue one finger to that which is good, nay it is impossible to haue one good thought. This is the cause, why the Prophete saith, That men must breake vp their fallowe groundes, and not sowe among the thornes, as if hee saide: I see wel what you doe: when one telleth you, that you haue offended GOD, you counterfeite some faire countenance, and it seemeth that you bee as if ye were reformed, and yet you alwayes continewe the same you were. But it is not ynough to sowe in a fielde, but one must ridde the ground of rootes and thistles, and first breake vp the ground, which hath lien fallowe. But while you doe nothing else, but endeuour to appeare faire vnto the eye, the thornes, the brambles, the nettles, and such other lyke euill weedes remaine still within. Yee shal not therefore haue any good seede, so farre shall yee bee from bearing of good fruite. And for the same cause our Lorde saieth heere, Thou shalt not kill: in steede of saying, Take ye heede ye defend and preserue the life of your neighbours. And verily wee see, by common experience, how men woulde

Iere. 4. 4.

acquite themselues before GOD, with some faire shewe and appearance, when notwithstanding they retaine stil their vices and corruptions, according to that which wee haue alledged of the Prophete. For if one exhort vs to doe well vnto our neighbors, true it is, wee knowe not howe we might altogither contradict and gainsay him. Wee would therefore acquite our selues in some sorte, but yet our filthy corruptions remaine still within vs, and wee doe but plaster and white lime them ouer, as they which would be at no great cost doe, when their houses are ruinous and ful of clefftes. For what doe they? They stop vp the holes and creuises with Morter, and plaister them ouer, and all this whyle the ruinous and decayed places of their houses remaine still vnrepaired. So is it with vs, wee plaister and parget ouer, and so wee woulde lightly discharge our selues in our dutie. And yet nature teacheth vs the contrary: for if one will sowe a field, will hee cast his corne among briers and thornes? No: but when he seeth his ground, after it hath beene laide fallowe, to bee couered with thistles and thornes, he breaketh it vp with the plough, he grubbeth vp the brambles, he manureth and tilleth it.

Let vs then learne, that not without great cause GOD condemneth first of al the vices which are in vs. For hee seeth well that they haue taken deepe rote, and that hee shall neuer bee able to holde vs in such a stay as to cause vs to walke according to the rule of his iustice, except hee first plucke vp this cursed roote of euill which hee knoweth to bee within vs. Loe, why he saith: Thou shalt not kill, as if hee saide: Will you liue in mutual loue and charitie one with an other? It behoueth that euery one enter into himselfe, you must all diligently examine your owne heartes, whether you beare any hatred, any enimitie, any euill will against your neighbours, which may occasion you to attempt any one thing against them.

Let vs then beare in minde all these thinges; and let vs knowe, that when wee shalbe purged from all anger and choler, from all hatred, from all iniuries and wronges, wee must then come to this point, to vnderstande, that it sufficeth not that we abstaine from all harme and iniurie, from all violence and oppression, that wee haue attempted nothing against the persons of our neighbours, that

wée nourishe no hatred nor malice in our hearts, against them, whome wée haue borne euill will vnto: but wée must liue in al loue and charitie, wée must bée as brethren ioyned and united together, to worshippe GOD as our common father. Yée sée what the pointe is whereunto wée must come in this commaundement.

So then let vs note, that when wée will profite in the laive of GOD, wée must haue respect vnto the vices and imperfections, whiche are within vs, displeasing our selues in them, and endeauouring by all our might and power to vote them out of vs. Haue wée done this? This is not yet all: for GOD doth not hand vs to bée idle in this worlde, he hath created vs not onely to abstaine from all euill (for the stones, and blockes, and other insensible creatures doe so muche as that is:) but he hath made vs to doe well, and therefore men must applie and endeuour themselues hereunto.

Knowe wée therefore, that when our Lorde will, that the life of our neighbours bée deare and precious vnto vs, he teacheth vs withall, that hée whiche shall not aide and helpe his neighbours in their necessitie, slaieth them, as much as in him lieth. And so let vs remember, that we shall not onelie then bée guiltie of murder, when wée beare some priuate rancour and euill will against our neighbours: but that then also, when wée shall not haue relieued, and succoured them in their needes and extremities, when wée shall not haue employed all our paines for them when they stande in néede of our helpe: wée shalbe culpable of manslaughter before the face of GOD. Seeing it is so, wée must not in this place séeke howe to flatter our selues: for wée sée what the rigour of the lawe is, albeit in no point excessiue. For can wée so refuse and take our leaue of GOD, as not to bée knitte and united together with men, whome he hath created to his owne image and likenesse? Shall wée not beare this reuerence to him, who is our father, that wée liue in a fraternitie & brotherhood one with an other, seeing he hath linked vs together in such a bond? Shall we say that God presseth vs ouermuch, that he laieth vppon vs too heauie a burthen, when he leadeth and directeth vs to suche equitie and vprightnesse? Howsoeuer the case standeth, let

let vs take heede we flatter not our selues, when we haue intelligence of the minde of our Lorde, who will haue vs employe our selues, & bestowe all our aides to aide and helpe one another, seeing the life of our neighbours ought to be so precious vnto vs, as it is deare vnto him. Now haue wee the exposition and meaning of this commandement, Thou shalt do no murder. What resteth then, but that we pray vnto God, so to guide and conduct vs, that we may as we ought, frame and conforme our selues vnto his will? For it is to no purpose to alledge that his wordes are obscure and harde, or to alledge that there are so many commaundementes, that wee cannot beare them in minde. For God hath spoken and declared his minde in one worde, and vsed such brevitie, euen for this cause onely, to bereame vs of all excuse. Againe, that we might not alledge that we know not at which ende, or where to begin, the better to vnderstand the meaning of this commaundement, he teacheth vs this point also: namelie, that we must not, as our woont is, giue our selues leaue to doe euil vnder this colour of perfuading with our conscience, that it is no mortall and deadly sinne which we attempt: but we must alwayes thinke the contrarie, to say thus: If I doe the least harme a man may possiblie haue vnto my neighbour, I am a murderer before God. This we ought to thinke: for when we are willing to doe euill, lose the deuil is at hande to blinde vs herein, to be willing at the first to kill, and to cut a mans throte. This (as I haue said) seemeth vnto vs a fearefull and cruell thing: for nature withholdeth vs from such rage and furie, as to say: I will kill and murder. But when one shall haue grieued and angred vs: well, wee fume and fret with him, and this seemeth nothing. But are we dispitefullie handeled? We will render, as farre as we are able, to quite him with the like: and if we vse no extreme and violent fiercenesse, we thinke we may well be pardoned. Are we more abused? We waue our dagger, and wee strike our neighbour: but it shall be but one blowe, and no deadlie wounde giuen, and then wee thinke there is no murder committed. Beholde howe men dispense with themselues. And why is this? Because they thinke of no other thing, but how to diminishe their faultes. But it behoueth vs, as God hath taught and instructed vs, to followe a contrarie order to this: that is, that when wee thinke of doing wrong, of striking and beating our neighbours, or reserving any hate or dispite against them, we set murder alwayes

before

before our eyes, and thinke: Poore and wretched creature, whither runnest thou, whither doest thou cast thy selfe headlong, when thou seekest to be culpable and guiltie of murder before God? So then let vs not make this vain allegatiō, that we know not how or where to begin, for God teacheth and sheweth vs, & wee cannot be ignorant of any thing, but wilfully and wittingly: and it cannot but appeare manifest in the end, that wee would not cast aside our eyes to see and knowe that which might haue beene visible and apparant vnto vs. Loe what we haue to beare in mind in this place. And withal let vs remember, that God hath first forbidden murders, not mentioning any thing of charitie, and not shewing vs before that we are bounde to succour one another as neede and necessitie requireth. And why? For wee are full fraughted with wicked lustes and affections, which of necessitie must first bee rooted out, as a ground which is full of thornes and briers, must first, before it can be sowed, be ploughed vp, and ridde of all his weedes, as wee haue aboue saide. So is it behoueful and expedient, that wee be purged of the vices which by nature are in vs, or otherwise wee shall neuer be disposed to walke in true and perfect loue one with an other. So then nowise remaineth, that euerie one consider of his owne abilitie and power, and so bethinke him selfe of discharging his duetie towardes his neighbours. If I shall haue wherwith to aide them, I must conclude and resolue my selfe on this, that whatsoeuer God hath bestowed on mee, it is not for my selfe, that is to say: that I should onelie loue and tender mine owne person, but I must haue an eye vnto others: and when I haue the meanes wherby to succour and helpe them which stande in neede of mine aide, I must diligently employ my selfe herein. For there is a communitie and fellowshippe betweene men. God woulde not create so many seuerall worldes as persons, but hee hath linked vs al together. Seeing therefore it is so, that GOD hath placed vs one so neare another, wee must obserue and keepe this communion wherein God hath ioyned vs, and not forget that it is against nature for vs to hate our own flesh. But now betweene the faithfull there is another greater regard and consideration to be had, than this wee haue spoken of. For they ought to knowe, that they are not onely formed to the image of God, but they must also consider, that they are all members of our Lorde Iesus Christ, and that there is a more streight and sure band wherwith they are coup- *Ephes. 5.*

led, than this of nature which is common and appertaineth alike to all mankinde. And by so much the more ought wee to detest those which so forget all the vnion and coniunction which God hath set among his people, and all those which desire nothing els but to bring to vtter ruine and destruction that which God hath vnited and coupled, and to teare asunder the bodie of the Church. As wee see the ministers of Sathan doe, which are wholly set on euill and mischiefe, that it semeth they would dispite God, how they separate themselues from them by whom they thinke they can receiue no profite, and who serue not for their lust and fancy. When so brutish and enormious an affection shall bee in vs, is it not a signe that the Diuel possesseth vs, and that the spirite of God dwelleth not within vs: yea, that we haue not one droppe thereof? Nowe therefore let vs learne so to rule our selues to this commandement, that being purged from al rancour, all malice, and euill will, wee haue diligent consideration of employing our selues to serue and minister to our neighbours, and to acquite our selues of our duetie towardes them, according to the meane and abilitie which God hath geuen vs. And if euill thoughts and affections, although they bee very secret and hidden, are accounted for murders before GOD: what shall bee saide of the violent dealinges, of the oppressions, and excessiue demeanours of them which ouerflow their bankes so farre, as that they are ready to beate and to kill their neighbours, as much as lieth in them? Must wee not account them worse than all the Paynims in the worlde? But how euer it be, let vs on our parte consider, that wee shall haue euill profited in the schole of GOD, if wee keepe our handes onely from doyng of euill, and our heartes in the meane time be not corrected and reformed. And further, they which will shewe what is the true perfection of Christians, must not onely abstayne from nourishing any secrete malice and euill will in their heartes, but they must declare themselues to bee brethren truely, and in deede, by employing themselues for the behalfe and commodity of their neighbours, as much as shalbe possible for them. Nowe if it bee not lawfull to nourish any secrete euill will, much lesse is it permitted to behaue our selues so inordinately, as to strike, and to kill, and to exercise any violence. And who so order themselues so, are as wilde and sauage beastes. And if this affection and desire of euill doyng hath beene condemned by mans lawes, what shall this bee, when the

1. Pet. 2. 17.

lawe

lawe of God condemneth vs: Let vs therefore learne to haue an eye vnto him, and not consider of our faults but according to his nature. And because he is a spirite, and wil be serued of vs in all integritie & vprightnesse, let vs remember, that when wee shal haue withholde our hands and feete from doing of euil, we must also haue our hearts pliable vnto him: yea, and that in such subiection and obedience, that we desire nothing, but by our deeds to shewe and prooue, that we are truely and in deede his children, liuing in true fraternitie and brotherly loue, with all them which are called with vs into the same coniunction and fellowship. *Ioh. 4. 24*

Nowe let vs cast our selues downe before the face of our good God, with acknowledging of our faultes, praying that it will please him to make vs feele them better than we haue done: & that knowing how hee hath bounde vs to our neighbours, and will haue vs make proofe of the feare wee beare him in withdrawing our selues from all euill, from all iniurie and violence: let vs pray him to graunt vs the grace to walke in such brotherly loue and charity one with another, that wee all shoote at this especiall and principall marke namely, to honour him as our father, and to leaue our selues to bee gouerned by him and his holy spirite, according vnto his worde: and pray wee that we bee more and more confirmed in this, knowing that hee hath reached foorth his hande, & men to conduct and holde vs vnder his protection. That it wil please him to graunt this grace, not only vnto vs, but to al people and nations of the earth,

&c.

Maister Iohn Caluin,

The 9. Sermon.

Deut. Chap. 5.

18. Thou shalt not commit adulterie.

Tit. 2. 12.

Saint Paule speaking of the life of Christians, hauing exhorted them to the feare of GOD, addeth that they must walke righteously and soberly. Nowe, there is no doubt, but that this appertaineth to the second table of the lawe. Will wee then obserue that which God commaundeth vs in the seconde table? It sufficeth not that wee doe not any wrong or iniurie vnto any, either in his person, or in his goods: but besides this doctrine, it is further required, that wee liue in all temperance and honestie. And to this purpose mention is made hereof, in this former place which I haue alledged to Titus, where it is said, That wee haue beene redeemed by the grace of our Lord Iesus Christ, to the end we should liue in this worlde in the feare of God and soberly and righteously.

2. Tim. 2. 2

In another place to Timothie he saith, That if there be a good policie and rule of gouernment obserued, wee shall walke iustly and honestly in al godlinesse. Nowe, touching the feare of God, this is that spiritual seruice whereof wee haue spoken heretofore, that God bee purely & sincerely worshipped of vs, that we put our whole trust and confidence in him, that wee cal vpon him, that we beare him the reuerence which he deserueth. But come wee to our neighbors. Will ye learne how we ought to be conuersant with men? Loe two articles or points to be obserued, which he placeth to this purpose. The first is integritie and vprightnesse, that is, iust dealing, that wee vse no violence, no extortion, no deceit in the goods of our neighbours. The second followeth: that we be not dissolute in life and conuersation, that wee shewe no villainous and vnchast behauiour, that our liuing be not inordinate. And this is that which he vnderstandeth by honestie or sobrietie. We haue seene, when God did forbid murder,

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how in expounding this worde, we said, that God meant thereby to deterre vs from doing any outrage or iniurie: and not only this, but he would warne vs thereof, that wee shoulde seeke to liue in peace with our neighbours, and not suffer any to be troubled and molested by vs. It shal be further handled heereafter touching the goods also of our neighbours, that we ought not to beare false witnesse against them: and this appertaineth in like sorte to the iustice and vprightnesse which must be in vs. So then, if we wil reserue vnto euery one his right, we shal vse no violence or iniurie in the persons or goods of our neighbours, wee shall not attempt to spoile any one of his substance. But here God enterlaceth another precept. That we commit no fornication, which is comprehended vnder the word of sobrietie or temperance. For, albeit wee robbe not any one of his substance, although we be no murderers nor barretters: yet being vnchast, dissolute, brutish, and beastly in our life, we may not thinke that God is pleased with vs. For no thing is so inseparable as vprightnesse, and sobrietie, seeing God hath ioyned them togither in his law, & that we see how he hath confirmed the same by his Apostle, expounding by him this which is here briefly touched. And therefore if we will haue the natural sense and meaning of this place, let vs know, that God here commandeth vs to leade such an honest and chast life, that there appeare no filthinesse, no lasciuiousnesse of behauiour, no vncleannesse in vs. As to what is the summe & contents of this precept. It is true, that expressely he forbiddeth vs, in this place, to be aduulterers, that is to say, to violate & breake the faith plighted in marriage, that none entise and allure the wife of another: but let vs diligently note that which alreadie we haue touched, that God vnder one forme or kinde comprehendeth the whole, and setteth before vs that which by nature ought to be abhorred and detested, to the ende wee might the more abhorre al fornication and vncleannesse. Wee declared yesterday, that when men are tempted to doe euil, they seeke to beguyle and deceiue themselues, thinking the fault shall bee but light. And so from the lesser they proceede to the greater: God contrariwise, to hold vs in a streighter bridle, setteth downe vnto vs the sinnes which are more enormious, to the end that being preuented with a greater feare, wee might not so easily bee induced to committe any fault. As if he said, Take heede howe you fall, for this might bee to breake

your necke. Persuade not with your selues that you shal slyde but a little aside, for you shal haue a deadly fall: and therfore take yée diligent heede. Loe in effect why God proceedeth after this manner in his lawe, and why now he speaketh not in general of al fornication, but of adultery, which is to breake wedlocke. Nowe wee knowe, that if any thing must bee kept holy and inuiolable in the whole life of man, it is the faith which the husband plighteth vnto the wife, and the wife promiseth vnto the husband. True it is, that al contracts & promises we make, must faithfully be obserued: but if we make cõparison, we shal find that mariage not without great cause is named
Pro.2.17. the couenant of God. Solomon sheweth by this worde, that GOD beareth rule ouer mariage, hauing it vnder his garde and protection. And for this cause, if the husband breake his promise which hee hath made vnto his wife, hée is not periured onely towards her, but towards God. As much is to bée said of the woman, that she doeth not only wrong vnto her husbande, but to the liuing God. For vnto him is she bounde, in as much as God also will haue the care of maintayning mariage, whereas it is ordained by him, and he himselfe the author therof. Therfore, when we heare this worde of adulterie, we ought to holde it as execrable and accursed: as if men woulde in expresse termes despite God, when they will as enraged and furious beasts, breake the holy and sacred bond which he hath established in mariage.

Now then we sée how highly God estéemeth of honestie and chastitie. And why? When he wil that we be sober, continent, chaste, and modest, he saith vnto vs, Except you be honest and sober, you bee as adulterers: that is to say, What so euer excuse you shal pretende before men to make your faults light and little, I haue you in great hatred: for al your life is infected before me, you are corrupt and stinking in my sight. We sée then, as I haue already touched, that heere is a streight commandement to holde vs in all honestie and modestie. And by this we sée, how the excuse of them which say, They doe none any wrong, when they are inordinate in their liuing, and ful of many outragious enormities, how vaine (I say) and friuolous this excuse of theirs is. For our Lord knoweth wel why he vsed this maner of speaking. For it is not because he is tongue tied, and cannot speake other wise, or that he knew not in what order to set and di-

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geſt his matters: but becauſe hée would ſhewe, that albeit men will make the matter verie ſmal, when they are diſſolute and diſordered in liuing, hée hath an other balance than ſo, wherein to weigh their offences, and will condemne all of them as adulterers, which abuſe themſelues to al villanies and vnchaſt dealinges. So much the more therefore ought wée to weigh this worde which is here mentioned, when it is ſaide, Thou ſhalt not bée an adulterer. But all this notwithſtanding, wée muſt conſider of the degrées which are conteined vnder this commaundement.

In the firſt place then let vs knowe, that God will haue the holy coniunction in wedlocke kept pure and vndefiled. For if our perſons are counted precious, & our liues held deare in his ſight, he will alſo that the loyaltie and mutuall faith which ought to be betweene the huſband and the wife, be in price and eſtimation, that ſuch an holy thing as marriage is, be not ſet forth to all reproch and villanie. And this ought to teach vs, that God will not haue a man caſt an vnchaſte eye on the wife of his neighbour. And why? For our Lorde hath alreadie coupled her vnto her huſbande. Hée will that her huſband bée her ſhadowe: that when we think on euil, and ſet our minds on any vile luſt, we ought to ſtand in feare of that which is declared vnto vs: namelie, that God will wreake him ſelfe on all them which violate and defile the holy coniunction which hée hath ſet forth in his owne name. And this in like ſort perteineth vnto wiues touching their huſbandes: namelie, that the wife ought not to giue her ſelfe ouer to wicked deſires, when ſhe beholdeth a married man. And why? God him ſelfe hath aſſigned vnto her, her mate. It behoueth then, that except wée will bid battell to our Creatour, euerie one liue in his houſholde, as he is matched, that this order bée inuiolablie kept, ſeeing God is the authour therof. This is one point to be obſerued.

Moreouer, we muſt alwayes returne to this point, to conſider of the nature of God, that he is not an earthly Lawgiuer, that he forbiddeth not onelie the exteriour acte, and permitteth vs in the meane while to bée giuen vnto our wicked luſtes and affections. For GOD will not bée ſerued with eye ſeruice, and forbiddeth not onelie the acte it ſelfe when marriage ſhall be broken and violated, but he interdicteth all wicked deſires and affections. And this

is the cause why Iesus Christ saith, That he which looketh but awry on the wife of another, that euen he is an adulterer before God: and albeit he be not culpable by the lawes of men, and that hée may be accounted chast, as not hauing committed any whoredome: yet notwithstanding, before God he is already condemned, as if hée had committed fornication. Therefore when wee heare this worde of adulterie, which is so condemned, let vs learne to abstayne from all fornication, not onely touching the act thereof, but to kéepe and reteine all our senses chast, that chastitie and continencie be both in our eyes and in our heart. For behold how S. Paule hath defined true chastitie when he saith, That al which are vnmarried, ought to study how they may obey God, by kéeping their bodies & their minds pure & cleane. He saith not, That they who haue not defiled their bodies wt fornications, remaine chaste: but they which take paynes to kéepe both their bodies and soules vndefiled. And whē we shal haue cōsidered, how God abhorreth and detesteth al adulteries, we must yet goe further, applying and extending the same to all fornication and vncleannesse. True it is, that he which breaketh the fayth and trueth of marriage, committeth a double offence, and much more enormious (as I haue already said:) but we must alwayes remember this, that God will not haue men only, not to attempt any thing against marriage, but he cōmandeth also that mē lead not a brutish life, that they suffer not fornications to haue their ful flote. He forbids them which are not married, to wander hither & thither in their concupiscences, and to abandon themselues to al lustfull meetinges, willing them to be pure and cleane both in bodies and minds. For he saith, That not onely their soules, but also their bodies are the temples of the holy Ghost, as it hath béene already recited. And these are the wordes of S. Paul, whē he warneth the Corinthians, that this were a wicked & infamous thing for them to suffer, as they had already suffred fornications among them. Know yee not (saith hée) that your bodies are the temples of the holy Ghost? Loe then, seeing God doth vs this honor, to chose our vile bodies, which are not only brittle vessels, but carions, euen earth and rottennes, & yet notwithstanding God honoreth them so far, as to make them temples of his holy spirit, to dwell therin, & shal we venter so to moile thē in all filth & infectiō? shall we make them as stables and styes for hogs? What a treachery is that?

Mat. 5. 28.

1. Cor. 7. 34.

1. Cor. 6. 15.

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What an abhominable wickednesse? Neither is this all. For let vs consider whither S. Paule leadeth vs. Our bodies (saith hee) are the members of Iesus Christ. This is then all one, as if a man shoulde rent in peeces the body of Iesus Christ, when he abandoneth his body vnto fornication and vncleannesse. For it is certaine that we cannot intermingle the sonne of God with our filthes & abhominatiõs, he being the fountaine of al puritie. So then, when a man yéeldeth himselfe vnto fornication, he doth as it were teare in sunder the body of our Lord Iesus Christ, as much as lieth in him, not that wée may do it, for the sonne of God is not subiect vnto vs, to be so dishonored, but we notwithstãding shalbe culpable of such a blasphemy as this, we shal be guiltie of such an iniurie done vnto him. Therefore let vs learne that God wil, that not only euery one for his part obserue the loyaltie & faithfulnes required in mariage, but in general, that wée be sober, and chast, to walke in al puritie of life, & not to giue the bridle to all filthinesse and vncleannesse. The reasons which I haue alreadie alledged ought well to moue vs hereunto: and this also which I haue alreadie touched of adulteries, being applyed (as is to this purpose) may lead vs to all sober and chast liuing. Let vs therefore haue all our senses tyed vnder such temperance and sobrietie, that when the Diuell shall sollicite vs to any vncleannesse, we may alwayes giue him the repulse, that hée finde no accesse vnto vs, being excluded from all entrance. A certayne Paynim Rhetor (well to say, That it is not ynough for a man to haue his handes abstinent: that is, that he bee not giuen to rapine and spoyle, to wrong and iniurie any one: but hée must also haue his eyes continent, that is to say, hée must not be giuen to vnchaste and wanton lookes. If this hath béene taught by those poore, ignorant, and blinde wretches, what shal become of vs, if wee remember it not, when we are warned (as I haue already sayde) that God hath sheiued vs this honour, not onely to reforme our soules vnto him, but our bodies also, although they be mortall, and that we see they haue nothing in them but rottennesse and corruption? Seeing then it is so, that God accounteth our bodies as his, and that hee will dwell in them, let vs learne to walke warily, that wee commit no vncleannesse, and bée giuen to no kinde of filthinesse, to driue God from out of vs, who woulde possesse vs for his dwelling place, and for his holy Temple. And withall wee must remember that which Saint

1. Cor. 6. 15.

Cicer. off.

1. Cor. 6. 18. Paul saith, That other sinnes which a man doth, are cõmitted, without the body, but fornication is committed in the body. For it is certaine, that by thefts and oppressions we defile our bodies, and our handes (as the holy Scripture in this sense speaketh) that when we violently oppresse any, we haue our hands full of blood, as the Prophet Esay speaketh. But Saint Paule considering wel, that fornication is more shameful and ignominious, and that men ought specially to keepe themselues frõ it, declareth that fornication leaueth a marke behinde, which remaineth imprinted in the body, whereby it is open to al infamie and reproch. We are very desirous to conserue our honor and estimation vnspotted, it would grieue vs much, if any one should staine vs with some euil & infamous note: why then will we runne headlõg into such vncleannes, as to draw on vs a mark & impression of infamie and reproch in the sight of God, before his Angels, and in the face of al men? So then let vs diligently note this, & we shal the better be withheld from such corruption & filthines. For albeit our frailty be such, that the diuel tempteth & alureth vs hereunto: yet shal this serue vs for a bridle, to restraine vs to this puritie which I haue mentioned, not only of body, but also of minde. And moreouer, let vs heedfully note that which Saint Paul annexeth to the threat he remembreth of wicked persons, when hee saith: Let no man deceiue you with vaine wordes: for, for such things commeth the wrath of God vpon the vnfaithful and disobedient. For men flatter themselues at this day, as they haue done heeretofore: and it seemeth vnto them, that fornication is not so great and deadly a sinne. Yea, see some iesters and scoffers which scorne God, and call whoredom but a natural sinne, & say that fornication is but a smal matter. There are such filthy swine which will speake thus. Now for this cause Saint Paul saith: Let no man deceiue you. These scoffes and flouts were euen in his time very rife, in the mouth of the contemners of God, and many blinded themselues, as we know the world is much inclined to flatter it selfe. Let none deceiue you, saith Saint Paule, by such lying wordes. And why? For fornication is a detestable thing in the sight of God, as hee sheweth by the punishement which he hath sent vpon fornicatours: as Saint Paule noteth in the tenth of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, where hee bringeth in an example of a mighty army which was slaine for this sinne. And by this, is it not manifestly knowne, that God can not tollerate and

Esay. 1. 15 & 59. 3.

Eph. 5. 7.

1. Cor. 10. 8.

beare with fornications? For the life of man (as we yesterday declared) is deare and precious vnto him, they are creatures made and reformed to his image and likenesse. Nowe, when there are one, two, or three thousand mē dispatched, so that God destroyeth so great a number of his own images, that is, of creatures which he hath formed, must we not say that there was kindled some terrible fire of his vengeance? And what? Fornication was the cause hereof. Conclude we therefore, that we must no longer seeke to deceiue our selues, as if our faultes were light and easie to bee pardoned, seeing our Lorde which exceedeth not, or palleth measure in his iudgementes, hath reuenged it with so sharpe a punishment. But rather let vs know and remember, that we shall bee called to our account before the heauenlie Iudge, when happilie men haue absolued and pardoned vs, and that when wee haue thought there is in vs no infection and filthinesse, God shall put vnto his hande and declare it. Wherefore let vs haue an eye vnto him, and the examples which he giueth vs, that wee may remaine vnder his feare, and endeuour with greater diligence to abstaine from all pollutions and spottes of filthinesse. Behold in effect howe wee ought to vnderstande this seuenth commaundement of the Lawe, that we defile not our selues with any vncleannesse or intemperance. Nowe, if wee ought to keepe our bodies and soules vndefiled, must wee not withall diligence auoide all the occasions which might induce and leade vs vnto fornication? Yea verilie. Let vs therefore note, that they which abandon and giue ouer them selues to vnlawfulnesse, seeke nothing else than to entrappe themselues in the lines and snares of Satan: and although they are faultlesse in the eyes of the worlde, and none reprehende them: yet are they fornicatours in the sight of God. If this were well considered, wee shoulde not see any longer suche dissolutenesse in apparell, in gestures, and in wordes, as the worlde herein at this day vseth an enormious and outragious libertie. What if men and women so attire them selues to seduce and deceiue one another, and to laie their baites for fornication: are there not so manie whoredomes and fornications wrought? It is true, they will alledge: And as for me, I haue not plaied the fornicatour or adulterer. But yet notwithstanding, they will make them selues a preie for Satan, and will drawe others, as muche as in them is, into the same case. All these

enormities therefore, and superfluities, which are committed in apparell, which are vsed as snares to entrappe others, are reckoned for fornications, and are conteined vnder them before God. The like is to be said of vnchast gestures and behauiours, of ribaldrie, and filthie speeches. When a man and woman shall so frequent one the other, that they giue place vnto Satan, and so tame themselues to his subiection, as to be helde snared in his ginnes, and that they yeelde themselues bond and thrall vnto him: loe fornication committed before God. And albeit there hath beene no acte committed, no through promise made thereof, yet shall not God leaue to punishe these thinges: for hee is manifestly tempted. And hereby we see howe childishe and friuolous the shiftes and escapinges of them are, which will excuse this or that not to bee euill done, sobeit there be nothing meant or intended: as they which woulde that daunses, and suche other disorders bee permitted. Whate So, that no fornication bee committed, is this euill and wicked? This is, as if in plaine termes they woulde mocke God, and hoodwinke him, to buffette him, and cause him to prophesie who did him the harme. Wee knowe well that daunses can bee but the forerunners of fornications, that they are to open the gate wide vnto Satan, and to call him to come and to enter in boldely, and without al feare. Loe, what daunses doe alwayes bring with them. If one say, I meant no euill thereby: hee maketh God a lier. Saint Paule saieth, That euill speakinges corrupt good manners: And loe why hee alledgeth this from a Painime, that wee might haue so muche the greater shame. If wee accept not of the doctrine and instruction which is giuen vs by Saint Paule, let vs be taught in the schoole of poore vnfaithfull ones, and of idolaters. For they knewe well to alledge, That euill wordes corrupt good manners. Nowe, when the tongue shall bee infected with wicked and vnchaste speakinges, that in gestures and wordes there shall bee nothing but signes and markes of all wickednesse and villanie, if men say (as aboue we mentioned,) They haue no euill meaning: is not this to lie openlie and manifestlie vnto the holie Ghost? So then, let vs note, that when all fornication is forbidden, it is to the ende that wee shoulde walke modestly, and behaue our selues soberlie, both in our gestures and speakings, and that no dissolutenesse, & vnrulie behauior be found in vs, which may

2. Cor. 15. 33. Menander.

tend

tend any way vnto fornication. I graunt that all things are pure to them which haue their conscience pure, but this notwithstanding we must take heed, that Satan by his wilinesse preuent vs not, and make some breach in vs. Ye se in what sort this commaundement ought to be considered, that we take heede, not onely of the act of fornication, but of all that which is linckt therto, of al that which hangeth on, and is accessarie therevnto: of all that which dwelleth neere it, of all that which may induce and lead vs vnto it. Briefly, we must beare in minde that which lately I touched out of Paule, that as we ought not to do any wrong vnto our neighbours, touching their persons and their goods: so must we also walke in all honestie, and sobrietie, cutting off, and remouing farre from vs all those behauiours and intemperancies. Yea we see all filthie speakings, as deuises, and other like vnchast disorders are condemned before God, as conteined vnder fornication, so are other intemperate and riotous demeanors. Ye shal se these drunkardes which glut themselues as brute beasts, when they are well whitled, not sticke to giue themselues ouer vnto all vncleannesse & filthinesse: they are then so bestotted, that they know not their owne shame. Therfore, when men leade so brutish & beastly a life, drinking excessiuely, and ouercharging them selues with meate, and after this prostitute their bodies, and abandon them to all filthinesse and villanie, albeit they commit not fornication in act and deede, thinke we that they shall escape the hand of God, and not haue a malediction and curse fall on them as vpon fornicatours? Ye se then howe the sobrietie whereof Saint Paul speaketh, is so to be vnderstood, that if we will be chast and continent before God, we must not onelie abstaine from fornication, and from all wicked lustes and concupiscences: but we must vse our meate and drinke soberlie for our nourishment, and not to excesse and intemperance, so that hereby all modestie and sobrietie be laid aside and neglected. Lo what we haue further to beare in minde. Yea, if one obiect & say: And howe shall we be able, seeing the frailtie of our flesh is suche, to abstaine from al pollution & vncleannesse? For we se the incontinencie which is in men, & in this thing asmuch as in any: so vicious and corrupt their nature is. In deede it is true, that men shall not be able to be continent for our Lord will that euen in this behalf we feele the malediction & curse of the sinne of Adam: namelie, in this vnrulinesse of our flesh, except he by an especiall gift vpholde and preserue vs, as it Tit. 1. 15.

is saide, all haue not this gift, so that euerie one must consider of that which God hath giuen him. But howe euer we feele our selues disposed herein, God hath appointed a remedie for them which cannot abstaine. God therefore, albeit his pleasure is to leaue this marke and signe of infirmitie abiding in vs, yet in the meanes time hath hee assigned vs a conuenient remedie: Shall some man perceiue this frailtie in his flesh? Shall some woman feele the like? It can not be denied but that this is a sinne: and although it bee an inclination as proceeding from nature, I meane from this corrupt nature which we haue of Adam: yet is it in it selfe to be condemned. For, all suche vnrulinesse of the flesh, is farre from so excellent dignitie, as GOD gaue vnto mankinde, that we shoulde nowe beare such markes, in steade of being as we should haue bene, as Angels of heauen. So then, all vnrulinesse of the flesh is a vice: but yet so the Lorde beareth with vs, that hee hath ordeined suche a meane, as whereby this vice shall not bee imputed vnto vs for a vice, whereby this vnrulinesse of the flesh, being in it selfe vicious and damnable, shall not vs imputed before GOD, when it shall haue this cloake and couerture. And when a man, seeing that he can not abstaine, after he hath prayed to God, & recommended himselfe vnto him, taketh a wife, to the ende hee leade not a dissolute life, to exercise his lustes heere and there as chaunce serueth, as dogges, and bulles, and other like brute beastes doe: when he shall (I say) haue his recourse vnto marriage, as GOD hath ordeined: loe, this vice is hidden and couered, and commeth not to account. And in this wee see the inestimable bountie and goodnesse of GOD, that when he leaueth in vs this vice, suche a one as ought to shame vs: yet notwithstanding, hee ordeineth a good meane, whereby it is buried and appeareth not. And albeit men bee incontinent: yet are they not accused before God, nor brought before his throne of iudgement, if so bee they keepe them selues within the boundes of marriage: for all vnchastitie is not lawfull, as if a man would graunt him selfe an outragious libertie herein, and a wife likewise towardes her husbande: for we must take heede we make not of our house a stewes. But when a man shall liue with his wife in the feare of GOD, albeit the companie of the bedde be shamefull: yet before God and his Angels it wanteth nowe all reproche and infamie. And why? The couerture of marriage sanctifieth that which is

polluted and vnhallowed, it serueth to purge and make cleane that which in it selfe is filthy and vncleane. Therefore, when wee see that our Lorde is so bountiful and gentle vnto vs, that hee hath ordained such a remedy, are we not by so much the more wicked and vnthankful, if wee vse it not, and if all excuses which men alledge, be not hereby remoued and taken away? As who shoulde say, That GOD had not prouided for their necessitie, and that hee had not shewed him selfe so louing a Physician, to heale that euill disease which was in vs, as though hee had not at all interposed himselfe for our health, as wee see nowe he hath. Therefore, let vs lay aside all those excuses of fraieltie and weakenesse, seeing that our Lorde would aide vs in this behalfe, and hath ordained this holy estate of marriage, that all they which haue not the gift of continencie, geue not themselues ouer notwithstanding to any filthinesse and vncleannesse. Wee then see what we haue to beare in minde, and withal let vs further note that which the Apostle saieth, That the bed of mariage, as long as men and women keepe themselues together in the feare of GOD, and in all modestie and sobrietie, that euen this bed is honourable. So that, albeit by great reason it bee in it selfe shameful: yet God turneth it all into honour. It is not lightly to be considered, that the Apostle calleth that honourable before God, which except he did pardon it, were shamefull euen before men. But he pronounceth malediction and vengeance vppon all adulterers and fornicatours. When wee heare such a sentence pronounced of mariage, let vs learne to shrowde our selues vnder so honourable a shadowe, if wee haue neede therof, that our lustfull desire bee not condemned before GOD, and before his Angels. And they which shalbee able to abstaine from marriage, let them so consider of their abstaining for a time, that if neede shall require, they reiect not, but haue recourse vnto this remedy, which GOD hath appointed: and let them so loue out of mariage from day to day that they bee alwayes prest and ready to order themselues to the rule of God, when hee shal cal them vnto this estate. But nowe, heere wee may see, howe Sathan hath ouerthrowen the whole order which GOD hath assigned: yea, (euen vnder the colour of holines & religion) we see what abhominations are hereof procéeded: as among the Papistes it seemeth that it is the most Angelical vertue that may bee, to liue single and not to bee maried. *Heb. 13.4*

Lor,

Loe, an estate of al perfection, wil the Monkes say, when they are not maried. The Priestes will say, that hauing solemnized their vowes, they are dedicated to God. Againe they wil say, Wee are of his Clergie, we are as the floure of his Church, wee must be separated from the common filthes and pollutions of the world. So then among the Papistes one shalbe thought to come neere the state of the Angels in heauen, when he is not maried. Nowe in the meane time we see how God is mocked with so wicked and diuelish a presumption: for consider wee what beastly abhominations haue followed of this, that mariage hath beene so contemned and despysed. See these Priestes, these Monkes, these Nunnes, which dispytefully reiect this benefit which God presenteth vnto them namely, that if there bee any infirmitie in them, they may marrie: but they despise & disdaine it as a thing filthy & defiled. And this is euen to warre against nature. And therefore was it not necessary that God should reuenge himself of so presumptuous a pride, when men so dispitefully trample vnder foote a remedy which he giueth them: Shal we not thinke that diseased person out of his wits, which in stead of receiuing the potion which is giuen him for his health tũbleth it to the ground, in despite of his Phisician? so enraged are al these Angels of hel of the Papaste, al this pestilent vermine of Priestes, of Monkes, and of Nunnes, which haue reiected holy mariage: in which deede of theirs, they bid battell openly to God. And not contenting themselues with this, they ouerflowe their bankes in such sorte, that they dare vtter with full mouth those blasphemies, which ought to make the haires of all men, which heare them, to stande on ende. Were there no more but this, yet hereby might we see, that the diuell hath gotten there al the rule into his hand, and that this is the vse of Antichrist, and of this Apostolical seate of Rome, to spue out such blasphemies: as when it hath beene there pronounced, That they which are in the flesh, can not please God: that we must be separated from al vncleannesse, and therfore that Priests must be forbidden to marie. Loe, the very words of a Pope, which notwithstanding haue bin registred to posterity, as if it had bene an oracle comming from heauen. Now, if the diuel should haue all the swing hee might wishe: yea, shoulde be vnchained and let lose in the worlde, could he speake after a more detestable maner, to despite God, for instituting of mariage, than to say: That they which are in the flesh, can not please

Syricius.

God:

God. This is, as if he should condemne all mankinde: for in this his condemneth, not onelie them which liue at this day, but all the holy fathers which haue liued vnder the lawe, al the holie Patriarches, all the Apostles, and the holie Martyrs: so behold a deuill of Rome, which will banish out of the kingdome of heauen, both the Apostles, the Martyrs, and al the holie Fathers. Thus he which wilbe in the Paradise of the Pope, must be a companion of the deuill of hell: for albeit this be an enormious and outragious thing, that this miscreant Spirite hath pronounced such a blasphemie, as thereby to exclude the greter part of the holiest personages, which euer haue liued from the kingdome of heauen: yet would God neuer haue suffered, that such an horrible blasphemie should haue bene pronounced, but that thereby he would make manifest this abhominable seate of Rome, when he would permit these deuils so farre, as vnder a colour of holinesse, to reiect marriage: and suffer them for a iust vengeance, to loose the bridle to all wicked and infectious lustes, and to infect the world with their detestable Sodomitries: insomuche, that they excede in that wickednesse, which the Paynims (men without God) haue had in horrour and execration. Now, by this we are warned (as I haue alreadie said, not to set light by the giftes and benefites of God, but to vse them with al sobrietie, so that they which cannot contein themselues, bende their neckes, and receiue with all gentlenesse, the yoke of marriage, submitting themselues thereunto: knowing, that when the husbandes shall beare with the wiues, and the wiues shall seeke to liue in peace and good quietnesse with their husbands, this shalbe a sacrifice acceptable vnto God. If they haue a great charge of children, let them take heede to nourish and bring them vp, be they poore or rich, knowing that God accepteth & receiueth in good part, this seruice. Let women also, when they shal haue much trouble & griefe in caring for their household, knowe, that these are so many sacrifices acceptable vnto God. And albeit marriage bee contemned by these deuils, which (for to despite God) imagine it an Angelicall perfection, to abstaine from it: let them notwithstanding, which are in this holie estate, knowe, that God accepteth of them, that hee receiueth them, that hee gardeth and protecteth their house and familie. For, seeing he saith, That he is the authour of marriage, he will blesse it, when we shall proceede therein, according to his will and pleasure. Let them which are not married, take diligent heede notwithstan-

ding, to walke in the feare of God, and to esteeme and honour mariage as it behoueth. Let both the one and the other endeuour to keepe them selues in all puritie, both of bodie and of minde, as S. Paule hereof speaketh, in the seuenth of the first to the Corinthians, where he condemneth not the widowes and the rest which abstaine from mariage, but exhorteth them to do their duelties. For the virgins, and widowes, and such as are not married, ought so much the more to cleaue vnto God, and to walke in his feare, as being lesse hindered to dedicate them selues whole vnto him. And why? For they are not distracted with so many cares of the worlde. They which are married, haue more incomberances: howbeit, they must also take heede, that they permit not them selues too much libertie, but that they walke in feare, and in all carefulnesse of their duetie. Loe then, howe in all estates we must haue sobrietie and honestie in our persons, in such sort, that we may present & offer vp as liuely sacrifices vnto God, both our bodies and our soules, seeing he hath redeemed them so dearelie with the blood of our Lorde Iesus Christ, and that he would haue them dedicated vnto him selfe, to dwell in them, as in his temples.

1. Cor. 7. 34.

Nowe let vs cast our selues downe before the face of our good God, with acknowledging of our faultes: praying him, that he wil make vs feele them better than we haue done, yea, in such sort, that vnfeinedlie displeasing our selues in them, we learne to haue recourse vnto him, acknowledging the faultes and offences whereof we are culpable, that we desire nothing else but to giue our selues ouer vnto his seruice, and to please him in all, and through all, vntil we haue accomplished this course of ours, & ended this earthlie pilgrimage, to come to that saluation, which he hath prepared for vs, and reserueth vnto vs in the kingdome of heauen. That it will please him to graunt this grace not onelie vnto vs, but to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

The

The 10. Sermon.

Deut. Chap. 5.

19 Thou shalt not steale.

IF we well vnderstood but in one worde the will of God, which hée plainlie enough declareth vnto vs, we should not neede to studie muche for the right knowledge of ordering our selues, and of leading an holie and righteous life. But no suche ignorant person, as hée who will not vnderstand: none so deafe, as he which will not heare (as we say in common proverbe.) And this is the cause why we are so blinde, albeit our Lorde Iesus Christ hath shined before vs with his brightnesse, and hath made vs priuie of his will and meaning, as well in this precept of the lawe, as in all the rest we haue aboue handled: for if euerie one would enter into his owne conscience, to make a iust and true examination of his faultes, should he not finde that it is easie to iudge, that whē we do our neighbour any wrong, when we deceiue him in his goods, what couerture soeuer and cloake we haue for it, that we be culpable of theft before God? But what? If so be we may hide our shame before the world, it sufficeth vs: and the iudgement of God in the meane time is troden vnder foote, and we care not for it: but yet all these fig leaues, with the which we couer our selues, shall serue vs to no purpose, we must in the end come to our account before the heauenlie Iudge, and then shall we finde, that it is not spoken in vaine which he hath pronounced by Zacharie, That his malediction and curse shall come vpon him which sweareth, and vpon him which stealeth, that is, that in what matter soeuer of the lawe, and in what point soeuer we shal haue offended, he shall not faile to take vengeance thereon. Men therefore may well iustifie them selues, or flatter them selues: yet God in the ende shall displaie and shewe forth his indignation, both against sweareres, and against theeues. But the better to vnderstande the will of the Lorde, let vs knowe, that hée hath vsed this

Zach. 5. 3.

woꝛd of theft, oꝛ stealing, to make vs haue in greater hatred all deceite and all rapine, in all kinde of wꝛong which wee are able to deuise against our neighbours: as we haue alreadie aboue declared of murder and adulterie. If one call a man theefe, he wilbe grieuously offended, foꝛ this is a woꝛde of infamie and repꝛoche, and therefoꝛe hee will not suffer him selfe to be so dishonoured in the face of the whole woꝛld. God then, to the ende might induce vs to hate all deceitfulnesse, all harme doing, all extoꝛtion, that we might vse in the goods of our neighbours, vseth this woꝛde in steade of all other. He might well haue spoken after some other manner: he might haue said: Take heede how you do pull vnto your selues the goods of an other: take heede you make not your gaine by the losse and damage of your neighbour: take heede of vsing any such violence: but in a woꝛd he saieth: Steale not. And why? Euen to this end, that deceits, rapines, and pillages, and all harme doing, be had of vs in greater detestation: that we be ashamed to do wꝛõg vnto any, that we stand (I say) in great feare hereof, when wee see that wee are guiltie of theft before God. Moꝛeouer, let vs note, that there are many kindes of theeueries, foꝛ some be priuie and secret sleights, when they drawe to them selues by subtile meanes and practises, the substance of an other: others vse open foꝛce oꝛ violence, and this is properly called rapine, pillage, extoꝛtion: others vse yet moꝛe slie feates, and closer conueyance: yea, a man shall thinke they moue not a finger to touch any thing of their neighbours, a man shal not be able to accuse them before the woꝛld: yet because they walke not in all simplicitie and vpꝛightnesse, they are theeues before God. We see then, how we must consider of the kindes of theeuerie, when we will vnderstand what is foꝛbidden in this place. But in the meane time we haue to note, that God iudgeth not of theftes after the manner of men: foꝛ they which liue in great credit and reputation before men, shall not cease to bee condemned before God: yea, albeit none accuse them, but that the poꝛe whom they haue eaten and deuoured shall crie foꝛ vengeance: and although none of them speake one woꝛd, yet the afflictions which they endure, crie aloude in the eares of God, and sue pꝛocesse against their oppꝛessours, without sounding one woꝛde. So then, we must not bring our owne fansies to iudge of theftes, thinking to escape the hand of God, when we shal not be cõdemned of men, noꝛ punished by earthly iudgement: foꝛ God pꝛoceadeth in this muche further & higher.

Let

Let vs therfore briefly beare in mind, that touching God, all kind of harme doing, when wee desire to plucke vnto vs that which is not ours, is named theft throughout the holy Scripture. And indeede, when God manaceth a woe by the Prophet Esay, that he which hath pilled and spoyled others, shalbe rewarded with the like, hee speaketh not of pettie theeues, which we lead to the gallowes: but he speaketh of great Princes and Monarchs, which bare then the sway throughout the whole worlde. And agayne in the first Chapter, when hee addresseth his talke against the holie people, which was the Church of God, Thy Princes and gouernours are companions and Princes of theeues, saith hee. Nowe certayne it is, that none charged these of theft may these safe as Iudges & condemners of other pettie theeues, and yet sayled they not to be condemned before God. And thus the theeues which are honourable here below on earth, are notwithstanding accursed by the lawe of God, and hee hath pronounced on them his determinate sentence in this text. Wee must therefore humble our selues vnder the iudgement of God, & know that wee shall gayne litle, albeit our theeueries be excusable before men, although we couer them and colour them. For in the meane time the law of God shall haue his full course, and the execution thereof shalbe readie at hand for our condemnation. God hath forbidden nothing which he wil not call into account. Yee see then, what wee haue to beare in minde, concerning this place. Nowe it resteth, that that which wee haue briefly touched, we handle more amply, and as we may say by peecemeales, specifying it by examples, to the ende it may bee better vnderstood, as I haue already said: if we were diligent and attentiue to hearke vnto that which God declareth vnto vs, wee need not make here any long exposition. But what? Wee seeke nothing else but to cloke and hide our selues with some dissimulation; and albeit the thing bee cleere ynough to bee knowne, alwayes to make some doubt. And this is the cause why we must be so precisely charged, and more neerely pressed in all things. We haue alredie said, that there is more than one kind of theft. For some rob openly, as when one spoileth so manifestly that one may put out his finger, and say, This man hath stolen an horse, he hath robbed one of so much monie, he hath stolen a bed, a dish, or such like thinges. Well: these theeueries are sufficiently iudged of the worlde. But when a merchant hath counterfeite wares to sell, and knoweth not how to rid his hands of them, loe a simple man, whom

Esay. 33. 1

Esay. 1. 25

he will intrap and deceiue with them. Now happily this, men count not theft, and yet such a man is a theefe for using so euil a conscience, albeit no man condemne him. It is true, that he whose profit it shall concerne, will be a good and vpright Iudge in this matter: and if hee know the deceit and couin which is vsed, he will say, such a one doth me wrong. Wee neede not go to any great Doctour or Clarke, to shew vs that one hath done vs wrong, euery one knoweth it himself wel ynough, and yet wee thinke not on this kinde of theft, and wee knowe it not sufficiently. But God shal not faile to iudge and condemne him for a theefe, which hath so abused a simple man, and shall haue deliuered him counterfaite merchandize, seeing hee hath deceyued him which wanted al skill and iudgement. He in like manner which shal ouersel his ware to him which is altogither ignorant, is in like fault, and both these are theeues and robbers. Againe, a lewde and wicked man maketh a counterfaite peece of worke, and the fault therof is not espied, or how euer it be, he taketh for it as much as hee may possibly catche, without any reckoning of selling it, as it is worth: notwithstanding, being charged therwith, he will say, Tush, I had to deale with a rich cobbe, the matter is not great, hee hath a good purse to beare it. Wel, the man which vseth this, albeit he haue his shifting windlaces before men: yet the iudgement of god hath alwayes his course. If one demanded euery man his opinion heerein, and al answered, We hold not this for theft: God notwithstanding shal not retract his iudgement after our fantasies. Yee see then the theeueries which shalbe accountable before God, which we notwithstanding let slippe: and no thanke to them which haue graunted themselues such a liberty, if the euil be not pardoned. But what? Behold, the law of God is inuiolable, as we haue said: and it shalbe hereafter declared, that it alwayes bringeth his execution with it. It resteth then, that seeing we must not walke deceitfully, nor vse any subtile practises, we returne vnto this equitie, which nature prescribeth vs: namely, that we do not vnto another that which we would not haue men to do vnto vs. When we shal haue such a rule, it shal not neede that we haue any great volumes, to learne what it is to steale. For in one word, euery one shalbe able to know how to walke with his neighbours, namely, that he vndermine not his neighbours maliciously, that he seeke not to enrich himself at the cost and charges of another, that hee pull not vnto him the substance and goods which are

not

not his owne. There shal not neede then but this worde, and behold al the faire couertures, & best appearances we haue, shal vanish away, and come to nothing. For when we shal haue deceiued mē, we think we haue also forthwith blinded Gods eyes. Let vs take an example in this place, whereby this point shalbe fully & perfectly vnderstande. He which by lawe shal haue gained the goods and possessions of an other, thinketh that he is the iustest possessor in the whole worlde. And why? For lo, his iustice hath passed on his side. Now, not to say that iustice was peruerted (as it is so true that many by their corruptions & wicked practises, make of iustice a meere spoile & robbery, ouerthrowing al right and equitie) that Courts of iustice shalbe oftentimes no Faires to sel the right of another, & to peruert al equitie. But be it, that no such thing hath bin in this case, but some man by his craft & subtiltie hath found the meane so to drawe vnto him the goods of another, that he wil boldly say, Al iustice & right hath iudged me this, so that there is no better or more iust title in al y world, than is this. Loe a double theefe before God. It had bene better by many degrees, that he had spoyled and robbed the house of his neighbour, than by law so vniustly to haue gaind the goods of an other. And why? There is theft committed: and againe, this theft is done vnder the colour of iustice, which is a sacred and holy thing. Verily God cannot bee able to suffer such a trecherie. Sure burglarie is worthy to be more grieuously punished then other theft: but when we approch vnto y seate which God hath dedicated vnto his maiestie, there to ouerthrowe & confound al equitie, behold, is not this an hainouser offence than any robbery? So then, let vs diligently note, that what cloke soeuer we may take to couer our selues before men, the law of god alwaies shal haue his force: that is, if we vse deceit or malicious witnes, if we vse extortion & violence, we shalbe condemned for theeues & robbers. If a man ponder this shadow, that he is in authority, shal vse any violence against his poore neighbour, and that by this meanes hee oppresseth him, this man is a theefe, & halfe a murtherer: so that he is no simple theefe, but qualified beside with manslaughter: & yet notwithstanding, this is passed ouer and pardoned. It is true, that one sometime murmureth hereat, but it is but betweene the lips. And al this while this outragious oppressor ioyeth in his doings, pleasing himselfe well in them: and which worse is, the greater theefe he is, the more he shal be honored. For as a man by scraping al vnto himself becommeth very

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wealthye and rich, so shalbe preferred and aduanced higher. Beholde then, howe by theftes one shal come to great honour, louyng the worlde. So then let vs not take theſe bandes to couer our eyes withal, but let vs rather know that which is contained in the holy scripture, that is: that we shall alwayes be theeues, when we shall not do vnto an other, whiche we would that one doe vnto vs, & whenwe render not vnto euery one his right. For we muſt define a vice by the oppoſite & contrary vertue. If we wil well vnderſtand what it is to ſteale, we muſt conſider what it is to doe right to our neighbours. But when we ſpoile them of their goods, when we rake them to our ſelues in what maner ſoeuer, when we vſe any cloſe deceit, or open violence, we are ſufficiently conuicted of theeuery. By this wee ſee, that theft is not committed only by handes, when one ſtealeth away anothers mony, or ſome part therof: but theft is committed, when a man hath not that which is his, and that we ſeeke not to conſerue & keepe vnto him that which God hath put into his handes, and will that a man keepe that which he hath. For example: If a ſeruant riotouſly conſume the good of his maiſter, he is a theefe. If a labouring man, or if one of occupation ſeeke nothing but to haue his dayes hire, and in the meane time loyſereth, and could wish his worke done, and his potage lupt (as we ſay,) it is certaine he is a theefe, and we ſhall well iudge him ſo. But wee muſt proceede further to other the lyke kinds of theft, and make this compariſon: When we render not vnto a man that which of right appertaineth vnto him, let vs know that this iniquitie ſhal be accounted as theft before God, and we ſhal be condemned therfore. But nowe it remaineth, that we conſider howe we ſhal walke in ſuch ſort that God accuſe vs not as theeues. This ſhal be, if firſt of al we loue our neighbours, as Saint Paule declareth in the 13. to the Romans. And this is to be marueiled at, that we Rom. 13. 8. 9. 10. account the matter ſo ſmall, to ſpoyle another of his goods, ſeeing that if one ſhould demande vs this queſtion, whether this is to loue our neighbours, and whether it be an harde thing to loue them, we would ſay no. For nature would knit men togither in this vnitie, & God hath formed them all vnto his ymage and likeneſſe, & therefore this ought not to ſeeme a thing ouer hard and grieuous to loue together. Now ſo it is, that if we haue charitie, wee ſhal neuer ſteale, as Saint Paule ſaieth: yea, if we would conſider of that right and dutie which we owe vnto men, & howe we are bound vnto them, we ſhould

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not al these admonitions & warnings. Thou shalt not steale, Thou shalt not commit adulterie. Thou shalt not murther, as S. Paule hath declared in that place. But what? There are very fewe which thinke hereon. But contrariwise, as I haue said, we are ful of vaine excuses: when we haue pilled one of his goods, when wee haue vsed any fraud, any malicious dealing, any extortion wee haue one excuse or other readie at hand to serue vs. But yet it appeareth by our deedes: that we haue no charitie, that we are as brute beasts: briefly, that we are not worthy to be numbred among men, seing we breake the bonde of vnion, in the which God would couple togither all the children of Adam. Lo then, for the first note let vs learne this lesson of charitie, if we wil not bee theeues. For the seconde, let vs note, that wee couet not to bee rich. For as soone as this desire of gayns shall bee in vs, it is certaine wee shall play the theeues: it can not bee otherwise. One shal at first sight thinke it straunge: but yet, when euery one shall haue awakened his vnderstanding, nature shall teache vs, as the Ethnikes knewe well to say, that it is impossible to desire to bee riche, but wee shal foorthwith bee inflamed to scrape vnto our selues by hooke or by crooke, the goods of an other. Will we then fly and auoyde theft: Wee must lay aside all couetousnesse, that is, all desire of enriching our selues, that there bee founde no longer any cauil in the woorde. And howe shal we do this? Let vs learne to content our selues with our estate and condition. For he which shal not haue a certaine rule, but shalbe alwaies moued by some couetousnes, his affections shall carrie him from one side to another, in such sort that he shal neuer haue any rest to say: I must holde my selfe within my bounds. I say, the condition and estate which God hath giuen vnto euery one, ought to bee as a bill and border to keepe him in, as if it were saide vnto him: Loe, thy God wil that thou passe not this which he hath giuen thee. Holde thy selfe content, otherwise thou not only troublest al humane order, but thou despisest God, as if thou diddest make warre with him. Beholde what we haue to note: that is, when we shal haue this rule of charitie to conduct vs, that we ought to learne to cõtent our selues with our condition. And why? Let vs knowe that this is the wil of God, & that herein he will proue our obedience. Nowe this cannot be done, vnlesse we obserue withal the rule of S. Paule, that is, that we haue learned to be rich & to be poore, to hunger & to thirst, as well as to haue abundance. *Phil. 4. 12*

abundance. Saint Paule saith, not only that we ought to be patient in pouertie, and protesteth that he hath had his part herein, (& therefore hath giuen vs an example hereof, & hath shewed vs the way) but he saith that we must learne to be riche, and to liue in plenty & abundance. And what meaneth this? It seemeth a needelesse thing to tell vs so busily of patience. When we are poore, euery man knoweth well that we haue need thereof. And why? For we shalbe tempted to many inconueniences. It is an hard matter and grieuous, when a man shal not haue bread to eate, & albeit he hath browne bread, yet would he ful faine haue his ease and commoditie further. So touching pouertie, euery one will confesse that we haue need to be exhorted, and to be warned, that we must not be tempted to doe euil. But when he saith, it behoueth that we know how to be riche: a man will scorne this saying, as grounded vppon no reason: & yet this doctrine is more necessarie than the first. And why? Let vs consider a litle what these rich are: euen bottomles gulfes, which can neuer be satisfied, & which are harder to content than any poore man. If we make comparison betweene the riche and poore, we shall finde among the poore many which vexe and torment themselues, which are frowarde and waywardly bent, many which are induced to pilfering, and to exercise many wicked sleights and practises: and againe, thee shal finde also a great part content themselues with that which God hath giuen them, and keepe themselues within their limites and borders. But when we come to consider of the rich, euen as farre as vnto Kings, and Princes, we shal finde that they are so inflamed and set on fire, that they burne with such a desire after the goods of this world, that they are neuer contented: yea, they are as it were grieued that the Sunne shineth vpon the poore. Briefly, we shal see, that the most part of those rich men, to whome God hath giuen the whole earth in possession, not yet to be satisfied, and to account it ynough. For (as I haue saide) they are yet grieued that the poore haue one common light of the Sunne with them, and that the poore drinke water. And albeit the poore trauell, and labour, and doe the best they are able for them, yet a riche man will enuie and also spite at them, although he enioy the sweate of their browes, and hath euen the fruits of their blood: and it seemeth him, that a man plucketh his heart and guttes out of his bellie, when he eateth one morsell of meate at his cost and charges. Such miserable couetousnesse, or rather such

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brutish crueltie a man shall see in the riche: and this is a thing ouer rife and common. So then it is not without cause that Saint Paule saith we shal haue profited exceeding much, when we shal haue learned to bee riche: that is to say, that we shall not bee stirred vp continually with a desire of getting more and more. If God giueth vs any abundance, let vs learne to keepe our selues within our bounds, without further coueting, to say: O, such a peece of ground would bee good & commodious for me, I must adioyne this to mine, & that other also. And againe, this is not yet all, that a rich man desire not to growe further in wealth: but it behoueth that we be poore in heart, that is to say, that we bee puffed vp with no such pride, as to repose our trust and confidence in our riches, that wee take not an occasion by them, to oppresse such as are feeble and weake, such as haue no credite to vnderprop and staie them vp in this world: lastly, that we be prest and readie to bee impouerished when it shall please GOD. He which at this day is verie riche, which hath his garners, and his sellers full, which hath his bagges straughted and full stored, which hath landes and possessions, which hath a rich trade of merchandize: let him, when it shal please God to bereue him of all, not thinke it straunge: let him not be ouermuch grieued for it, but let him minde the patience of Job, to say: The Lord hath giuen, and the Lorde hath taken it, blessed be the name of the Lorde. Ye see then howe it is a verie hard thing to be rich: yea, except we come to this point, to order our selues to the wil of God, to receiue peaceably what soeuer hee giueth vs: that is to say, to beare patiently the pouertie which he sendeth, and to content our selues with that which he shal haue giuē vs into our hand, without setting our heart theron. For otherwise it must needes be, that we be alwayes themes, whether we abound in riches, or be in pouertie. For the poore shalbe prouoked to do euil, & it seemeth them that God will dispense with them for their wickednesse: yea, oftentimes they will vse this cauillation: O, I see this man seeketh nothing else but to deuour me, euē to teare the fleesh frō my back, he would destroy me altogether, if it were possible: and why shal it not be permitted me to reuenge my selfe on him? Lo how euerie one would pay himselfe. But it is not for vs to take from him that which he hath spoiled. So then if we be poore, wee shall incontinently be driuen to stealing, except wee take vnto vs this bridle, to say, Well: our Lorde wil exercise vs, and for this cause we want

Iob. 1. 21.

the goodes of this worlde. We haue not that we could wish, and this is to this end, that it pleaseth God so to humble vs. Lo one thing to be noted. And let a man labour diligently to surmount this temptation.

Pro.30.9. For wee see that euen Solomon desireth of the Lorde not to be poore, for feare of being prouoked to steale. When suche a personage feareth yea, and maketh this request vnto God in the name of all the faithfull, ought not wee to stand vpon our gard? So then they which are in neede and necessitie, both of bread and of drink, and know not on which side to turne them to be relieued: they which lead so poore a life that ofttimes they haue not so much bread as to slake half their hunger: others which haue not their eases and commodities as they could wishe and desire: let all these in this case take heed they commit themselues into the hande of God, and pray him to giue them grace to walke in such sort that they bee not induced to wrong or iniury anie one vnder this colour, that necessitie prefferth them otherwise. And let them which haue winde and tyde with them, which flote in prosperitie and wealth, which haue their purses full of monie, take heede they oppresse not the poore: as they haue alwayes their nettes laide to this purpose. For see howe the riche behaue themselues herein. If they se a poore man falling into decay, they are as greedie hunters, they come incontinently too ouerthrowe and cast him vnder foote, and they turne themselues hyther and thither, and make many circuites, vntill at length they shal haue entrapped the poore man. Let them therefore which haue wherevpon to liue, take heede howe they ouerflowe their banks: but let them hold themselues rather backe, so that they abuse not their plentie and abundance. Let them which are of greater wealth take heed they lift not vp themselues to oppresse those which haue little. Behold howe wee ought to proceede in our degree and calling. Yea, when we haue occasions offered of doing wrong and iniurie, albeit wee are of our selues subtill enough to seeke them out from farre, let vs beware wee repell all such wickednes. And whereas rich men think that they haue made great gaine by the losse of an other, let vs knowe that they haue cut the throte of poore men, and that they haue made many widowes and orphans, though they thinke little hereof. But because our wittes are so sharpe and subtile to deuise all occasions of harme doing, let vs haue an eie vnto our GOD, who woulde make a proofe and tryall of our obedience in our vocation. We shall

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happily haue the sword in our handes, but let vs take héede of doing any hurt: & let vs cõsider, that if we were in the same state that poore men are, we would gladly wish to be releeued and succoured. Briefelie, if we wil absteine from theft, let vs not bée either cruell wolues, nor wilie foxes. For all they which walke deceitfully and maliciously, are as wilie foxes. Truely poore men, what néede soeuer they are in, when they are led to doe euil, they shew themselues no longer men, if they vniustly rake vnto them selues the goods of an other. But they which commit their théeueries by violence and oppression, are as brute beasts, which séeke nothing else, but to consume and deuour al. So then, that we be not théeues, let vs not be cruel. Aboue al let vs learne to waite for all that, which shall be necessarie for vs in this present world, from the bountie and blessing of God. If we hold fast this rule, it is certeine that all couetousnesse, and all pillages, and all deceites, and all such like thinges, shall soone be remooued. We shall not néede then any other medicine than this to heale all our vices: namely, that we lift our eyes from ẏ ground, to say: God is our father, he will prouide vs of all that we stand in néede of, it is hée from whom we must looke for all that apperteineth to the maintenance of this present life: briefle, it is his blessing which is the fountaine of all riches. If we were well and throughly persuaded of this, we should not néede more preceptes in the lawe to forbid stealings, we should not néede any more admonitions, wée shoulde not néede any more aduertisements, this only word would suffice.

But what? Wée demaunde of GOD our dailie bread, and while wée profess that hée sustaineth and nourisheth vs, wée exercise our rapines, our pillinges, our deceites, and other such wickednes. Is not this euen to mocke God, when I say with my mouth, Giue me my dailie bread, and in the meane while I go to séeke it of the deuil: For if we vse such vnlawfull meanes, if we deceiue one, if we spoile an other: from whom is it that we take our goods? Is it from the hande of God, or rather from the hand of the deuil? Are wée not companions of théeues and of robbers? It is certeine therefore, that we would the deuill enriche vs, when we are giuen so to deceite and extortion: and which more is, it is a sure signe of our infidelitie and vnbeléefe, and that we attend not any thing at al on the blessing of God, and thinke not, that he is rich enough to susteine and enriche vs. Loe howe wickedlie we are herein disposed: and yet this wée

1. Cor. 6. 9
Ephe. 5. 5

ought to profit our selues, when we heare that our Lorde accurseth stealinges, and that he teacheth vs, that they are detestable in his sight to let vs haue them in greater horrour and detestation. Therefore let vs first of all beare in minde, that God iudgeth not according to the fantasie of men, but that his will is, that we walke in all integritie and vprightnesse, that euery one haue his right, that none bee molested and troubled for his liuing and substance, that wee straightly withholde our selues from all iniurie and wrong doing. And againe, because we are so inclined vnto euill, let vs consider of those meanes which may holde vs vnder the obedience of GOD, and hinder vs from stealing, of which we haue alreadie spoken: and let vs know, that God hath ioyned vs together, that we should keepe this law and rule of equitie. Moreouer, let vs not desire to bee rich, but let vs practise this doctrine of bearing pouertie patiently, that we be not inflamed with a desire of getting, and aduancing, and promoting our selues further. Againe let vs abhorre and detest all cruelties and deceits: and aboue all, let vs learne not to bee brutish as to thinke that when we haue scraped together on this side, & the other, this may be to make vs rich. Let vs beware how wee deceiue our selues in this behalfe. And why? For true riches (as I haue saide) proceede from the blessing of God. We must therefore drinke of this fountaine, and be satisfied, if we will abstaine from all kinds of theft. But nowe let vs also enter in consideration of the threates, which GOD setteth before vs. When hee hath sufficiently shewed that this precept is of great equitie and that hee hath giuen vs the meanes also whereby to walke in all integritie and vprightnesse, without hurting or wronging any one: seeing vs yet ouer hard to be brought to the obseruation hereof, and that alwayes our wicked affections carrie vs alway headlong altogether backwarde from our duetie, he adioyneth his mandates and threats to feare vs, & to keepe vs in greater awe. And this is a small thing, and lightly of vs to bee considered, when he sayth. That theeues and extortioners shall not
1. Cor. 6. 9 entre into the kingdome of heauen? Loe then howe hee expresselie
Ephe. 5. 5 declareth and pronounceth vnto vs, that if we make so great account of this present life, as that for to pluck vnto vs some commoditie & better to passe through this present worlde, wee will wittingly prouoke the wrath and indignation of God, we shalbe exiled, and banished his kingdome. If we had but one onlie drop of fayth, shoulde

not this threat be euen to pearce vs to the heart? But yet our Lorde passeth further: for seeing vs so carnal: & so giuen ouer to the world, he sheweth vs, that euen in this worlde hee will make vs goe backward, and he which shall thinke to lift vp and aduaunce himselfe by subtil shiftes, by robberies, by extortions, that euen he shalde consumed, he shall haue a secret curse and malediction, which shall vndermine him, and consume him to nothing. As in that place which we haue alleaged of Zacharie, it is saide, That the curse of GOD shall come vpon the house of theeues and robbers, and shall remaine therein vntill they be wholie consumed. We see further howe hee hath spoken hereof by all the rest of the Prophets, by whom hee hath declared that when men shall thinke to enriche them selues, when they shall make their reckoning of, I know not what great wealth, GOD shall blowe on them: yea, with suche a breath, that all our pompe shall vanish, and that so sodenlie, that a man coulde not perceiue their fall and consumption. But God passeth yet further. True it is, that we may reade often and in manie places, that our Lorde scorneth and derideth them, which so torment them selues to gather together great substance when in the ende all shall decaye and fall away like water. But we shall see further, that greate riches shalbe the cause of their destruction, which haue liued in credit and reputation. Beholde, a father which shall haue pillaged, and spoyled an other, which shal haue the whole tune of his life prouoked and plucked on his heade the vengeance of God: well, hee dyeth: it seemeth vnto him that his children shalbe young Dukes. Howe, if hee had left them but some small portion, to haue bestowed them selues painfullie in some trade: if he had learned them honestly to travell for their liuing, his children might haue had wherwith to haue liued a contented life: but loe, the father hath twisted the rope to hang his heires. For when they repose their trust in the riches which shall haue beene wickedly gotten, it must needs be, that either they be led to the gibbet, or otherwise perish vnhappily. And what is the cause hereof? Euen the anger and indignation of God, which lighteth on them to consume al that which shall haue beene euil gotten by pillinges and extortions. The house must needs be accursed, God must needes shew that he is a iust Iudge, both vpon threues, and vpon al such as make a scorne of his diuine maiesty, when one speaketh vnto them thereof: as wee heare these iesters and hickscorners will say:

Zach. 5. 3.

Mich. 6. 12. 13. 14.

when

when the latter iudgement is denounced them: Wel, wel, it is long time thither, when they oppresse a poore man, who shal haue neither abilitie, nor credit, to maintaine his right against them. Nowe, in the meane time they bath themselues in their iniquities, and welter in their wickednesse. But what? When God seeth that men are so sensiesse, and that he can not winne them to euerlasting life, and that they account it nothing to be banished and excluded the kingdome of heauen: Go to (saith he) I summon you to appeare before my throne, behold, I wil now begin to put in executiō my once determined sentence: I wil giue you to vnderstand, that my curse is vpon euill gotten goods: I wil shew you that they, which for a time possesse them, must in the end forgoe them, and that they, their goods, and all their race and posteritie be consumed. Nowe, when we heare all these threats, ought we not to be moued with them, except the Diuel haue altogether bewitched and enchaunted vs? What resteth then? Let vs keepe so good and vpright a conscience as God requyreth of his, let euery one trauell faythfully in his vocation, let vs not seeke to greeue and molest our neighbour, let our whole studie bee howe to passe this life ouer, without offending God: and albeeit wee haue no great reuenues, although we haue not much to dispende, let sobrietie and moderation serue vs for a double portion. Loe how we are to behaue our selues. But nowe, if theftes are so condemned of GOD, what shal this be, when we robbe him of his honour? For wee must make this comparison betweene theftes and sacriledges. Beholde, God hath forbidden vs to be theeues. And why? Because he will that we obserue al equitie and vprightnesse one with another: he wil also that the goods he hath dedicated to our vse, bee so ordered among vs, that wee possesse them not by wicked practises, that hee which hath store of them, dispense and bestowe them so, as hauing but only the vse, and not the proprietie of them: that hee which hath little, content him selfe therewith, as we haue saide. Now, if God wil that we obserue such an integritie and vprightnesse towards our neighbors, as to conserue and keepe vnto them all the goods they possesse, if those things he hath created for our vse, be so deare vnto him, that he wil not we defile and make them vncleane by deceites, by oppressions, and such like thinges: what shal be thought of this which hee esteemeth by many degrees more precious? So then, when wee shall haue walked with our neighbours in al integritie, when wee shall

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haue sought to geue vnto euery one, that which appertayneth vnto him: let vs render also vnto our God his right, that is to say, let vs glorifie him, let vs take heede that he alwayes remayne in his entire maiestie: and let vs not vsurpe more than he hath permitted vnto vs. As wee see howe this rashe boldnesse is in vs, that when they haue shewed themselues madde and furious, in oppressing their neighbours, they will forthwith sharpen their hornes, and arme themselues against God. When they haue spoyled men of their substance, they woulde also that God should bee subiect to their outrages, and they will not obey him, but when they list, and in that seemeth them good: we must therefore beware of all these thinges. And for conclusion, let vs also take heede, not onely too abstayne from iniurie and harme doing, but withall, not to permitte or suffer, as much as shall lie in vs, that any one bee molested or indamaged. For these are two thinges which God commaundeth vs, Iustice and Iudgement: Iustice, to giue vnto euery one his right: and Iudgement, to the end we be not consenting vnto euill, and suffer not that the poore, which haue no meane to sustaine and vpholde themselues, bee troden vnder feete. For when I shall with mine eyes see one oppressed, and shall not seeke to aide and helpe him, beholde I am consenting to the theefe: so that the sentence of the fiftie Psalme may bee verified of mee, When thou sawest a theefe, thou diddest runne with him. For is not this to runne with them which steale and robbe, when we seeke not to represse them, or close vppe our eyes not to see them, or geue them the bridle in their neckes to passe further? Wee are consenting to a theft which is committed, and therefore wee must render an account thereof before God, as guiltie of theft. albeit this be nothing esteemed of among men. Let not any therefore thinke, that it is lawfull for him onely to keepe his owne: but let vs consider, that wee must employ our paynes also to conserue and increase the good of our neighbours, as our owne: and so the rule of charity exhorteth vs. Loe, how we shall not be theeues, neyther before God, nor before men. Loe, how the goodes which he hath put into our handes shalbee blessed of him, when he shall make vs prosper, and that we shall haue such a contentation, that we alwayes aspire vnto, & haue our minds set on our heauenly inheritance, knowing that there we shal haue al fulnesse of riches in perfection. Psal. 50. 18.

Now let vs cast our selues downe before the maiestie of our god

God, with acknowledging of our faultes, praying him to make vs feele them better than wee haue done, and that more and more wee may profite in the obseruing of his holy lawe. And because we are so wicked and peruerse, that all our thoughtes and affections draw altogether backward, pray wee that it will please him to reforme vs by his holy spirit, & draw vs so neere vnto him, that renouncing the worlde, and despising all earthly and transitory thinges, wee may aspire to his heauenly kingdome, where wee shal haue all contentation and quietnesse. And so let vs say, Almightie God and heauenly father, &c.

The 11. Sermon.

Deut. Chap. 5.

20 Thou shalt not beare false witnesse against thy neighbour.

WE haue heeretofore seene, that it is not lawful, after what manner soeuer, to molest and grieue our neighbours, either in their persons, or yet in their goods. But because there is yet an other kinde of hurting by the tongue, God woulde also make mention hereof in his lawe, as wee see in this place. Therefore, as before hee hath forbidden vs, to commit any outrage against our neighbours, which thing he hath comprehended vnder this worde of murder, not to trouble or annoy them in what sort soeuer, or to hurt them in their goods: so here hee sheweth vs, that wee ought to speake no euil of them, that wee must vse no talke which may bee to staine them with any blot of infamie, or any euil and wicked note. True it is, that expressely hee speaketh of bearing false witnesse, but this is, according to the rule we haue before set downe; namely, that he proposeth those thinges, which ought to bee most of al detested: for this end, that wee shoulde abhorre those sinnes, which any way come neere them. If wee therfore speake euill of our neighbours, if wee slaunder them, albeeit this bee accounted no grieuous sinne before men: yet God shal esteeme it as heinous as bearing of false witnesse. But one may make here a question, why God hath in this place spo-

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ken of bearing false witnesse, & of periuries, seeing he hath saide before, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain? For it seemeth hereby, that this is but a superfluous repetition. And in one so little summarie of the law, where there are but ten sentences, to reiterate, and put downe one thing twice, it seemeth not good or conuenient. But we must note for answer hereunto, ẏ the commandement which we haue before expounded, of not taking the name of God in vaine, was in the first table, where God had respect vnto the maiestie of his name, to the ende we might haue it in greater reuerence. Therefore, when we speake of God, let vs consider of the infinite glory which is in him, that we open not our mouth at any time, but in feare and humilitie. So then, be it we are to sweare, be it that we are to speake of God in any manner, wee must alwayes thinke, that his name ought to be had in reuerence, that we must not vse it at randon, rashlie, or vnaduisedlie. Thus much then touching that we haue before seene. Now God speaketh of an other thing: namely, of not hurting our neighbors, of not doing them any iniurie, or working them any damage, by our wicked tongue. So then, seeing these commaundementes haue two diuers endes, wee see how these two sentences are different, and that there is nothing superfluous or more than needeth. Let vs therfore diligently note, that forasmuch as it is in this place handled and intreated, how men ought to bee conuersant together in all charitie and vprightnesse, that although the name of God be profaned in false witnessing: the law notwithstanding is not superfluous, when it is commaunded, That we beare no false witnesse against our neighbors. Now we haue in this place to declare, that God would in this cõmaundement generally condemne all flaunders, all false reports, all defamations, and such like things. And to shew that this is so, it is said expreslie in an other place, Thou shalt not walke about with tales against thy neighbour, thou shalt not speake euill of him to defame him. And if the lawe of God conteine a perfecte rule of well liuing, it followeth that this is therein comprised. Now where shall wee place it, but vnder this sentence? Wee must therefore conclude, that albeit GOD hath heere specified the name of false witnesse, that this notwithstanding, he woulde extende this doctrine to all flaunders, to all false reportes, to all bytales, which tende to the discrediting of our neighbours, or to the hurting of them in their good name and estimation.

Leuit. 19. 16.

wée sée then howe God woulde here ioyne vs together in loue and friendship, in as much as hée permitteth not any to bée hurt in his good name, no more than in his person, or goods. Wherefore, he which defameth his neighbours, he which slaundereth them, in what manner so euer, as much as in him lieth, maketh as it were warre with God, and breaketh the bond of charitie, which ought to be betweene men: and when we shall haue well considered all, it is certeine, that false reportes, slaunders, & backbiting, do more harme oftentimes, than doe theftes. And so let vs knowe, that if wee will obey GOD, we must mainteine the honour and credit of our neighbours as much as shall lie in vs. For when he hath forbidden vs to hurt his good name, he willeth also, on the contrarie side, that wee mainteine the honour and estimation of al. Now it is not sufficiently maintained in his estate, when we harme it not, except we withal procure the good thereof. Nowe, we ought to proceede by the degrées which God would here signifie, when he speaketh of false witnesse bearing. The first is therefore, that when wee shall come into iudgement, we take heede of hurting eyther by any false report, any lying, any forswearing, whose honour and good we are bound to procure. For he which shall beare false witnesse against his neighbour, he slaieth, he robbeth him as much as in him is, and he doeth all the euill which proceedeth from periurie. Thus it is, that ofttimes we shal not thinke hereof, but the thing notwithstanding is so. And this
Deut. 17.7 is the cause why GOD commanded in his lawe, that the witnesses should bée the first which should laye handes to the execution of him, which was punished for any euill deede, to the end it might be knowen, that by their voices, and by their tongues, they had put him to death, and that the witnesses should be put in greater feare of speaking otherwise than the truth, when euery one should thinke he hath to render an account vnto God, if he shall haue bene a witnesse against any. So then, when question is of being a witnesse, euerie one must déepely consider of the matter, and take diligent heede hée enlarge not his conscience, but that he speake in pure simplicitie, that which he knoweth to be true before God. And here we are to thinke not onely of false witnessinges, which shalbe against the life of a man: but of such also, which concerne their goods and estimation. So then wée are warned in all respectes, to procure the honour and profits of our neighbours, when wée are to beare witnesse: and

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yet not so, that vnder this shadowe of couering the iniurie of him which hath offended, or of preseruing his goods, wee lie before God. For if the honour of men bee deare vnto vs, what ought the honour of God to bee, if wee wil make comparison? When hee forbiddeth mee to beare false witnesse against my neighbour, it is, because God will that there bee loue betweene men, that none be iniuried either in his good name, or in his goods. Nowe, if God haue a regarde and care of vs, which are but poore wormes of the earth, thinke wee that in the meane time he will forget himselfe? But if by false witnesse I seeke to beare out, and bolster him which hath done euill, if I couer the fault, if I dissemble it, certeine it is, that I blaspheme God as much as in me is. And why? For I protest that I will speake the trueth, and in the meane while I come to lie; And is not this to vnhallowe the name of GOD? Is not this to deface his glorie? So let vs not thinke, that God in this place woulde gratifie euill doers, to couer the iniquitie and wickednesse of men, when he sheeth, Thou shalt not beare false witnesse against thy neighbour? but he woulde briefly shewe vs, that wee ought, as farre as wee shalbe able, to procure the credite, and maintaine the good name of our neighbours: so dee it, this may bee done in trueth. Moreouer, let vs note, that GOD hath respect here rather to the wicked affections and desires, which procede from rancour and malice, than to the deede itselfe: as wee shall better perceiue in that which remaineth to bee handled. For wee haue alreadie touched, that God speaketh not here onely of those false witnessinges, which are giuen in iudgement, when a solemne oth is taken but withal, of all slaunders and defamations. So, in what sort soeuer I backbite my neighbours, this shall alwayes bee accounted for false witnesse before God. If I shall goe and blabbe a tale in ones eare, to defame my neighbour, loe a false witnesse. It is true, that I haue not bene called before the Iudge, I haue not put forth my hand to the booke, I haue not vsed any of these ceremonies: yet wee see howe GOD speaketh hereof: and therefore beholde howe wee shalbe culpable of so great a fault as I haue saide. But nowe, if I shall aduertise one vppon no euill will that I beare the man, that there is suche and suche a wickednesse in him, shall I for this bee accounted a false witnesse before GOD? No. For God hath respect precisely vnto the enimitie and euill will. If then I hate one, and shall vppon this goe about to discredit him by false reportes, if

for the euill will I beare him, I shall seeke to slaunder him, loe, in what I am condemned for a false witnesse. If I bee led with a desire of euill speaking, to defame my neighbour, if this vice reigne so in mee, that I endeuour with all my might to staine his credit, beholde I am a false witnesse. And loe for what cause it is saide, That charitie and loue couereth a multitude of sinnes, but hatred discouereth a multitude of faultes. See howe Solomon hath briefly touched in this sentence, what the note is of such false witnessings, as GOD by the lawe hath forbidden and condemned: namelie, that wee are led hereunto by hatred. And why? For if wee loued one an other, without all doubt, wee woulde endeuour to liue together in all loue and friendshippe. Wee knowe full well, that when we speake euill of one, to hurt his honest name, wee can but kindle a fire of dissention: for he, for the maintenaunce of his credite, must needes bee forced to chafe and fret against vs: and then beholde, all loue and friendshippe is broken. So then, as long as wee shall haue a care to mainteine charitie, wee shall couer, as muche as wee may, the faultes of our neighbour. But bee wee at variaunce: Our tongues shall forthwith be ouerlauish to speake euill of them, with whome wee disagree: and as our heartes shalbe empoisoned with malice, so must it needes haue his vent in the tongue, that the euill will wee haue smoking within vs, may bee set on light fire abroade. Let vs therefore diligentlie note, that GOD in this place hath condemned all slaunders, which proceede from enimitie and euill will. When wee hate one, wee could wishe him hanged: and if wee are not able to hurt him, neither in his person, nor in his goodes, by spoiling him of his substaunce: yet wee will seeke to shame him with some malicious scoffe or other: wee will endeuour, by all the meanes we may, to defame him. Therefore, when wee beare such hatred against any, this is sure an euill roote, and it must needes bring forth like fruite. Yee see what the point is, whereunto wee must come, if wee will haue the right vnderstanding of this commaundement of GOD. Now withall, let vs note by the way, that when it is said, That charitie couereth the multitude of sinnes, that this is not so to bee taken, that wee must flatter one an other, and by lying nourish the vices which are in vs: but this is spoken for this purpose, that wee blabbe not forth the faultes of others, as desirous to defame them; whereby we might

Pro. 10. 12.

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happily discourage them, and bee an occasion (peraduenture) that they shall abandon all shame, and geue themselues ouer to vtter impudencie: as wee see many desperate persons doe. Let vs note then, that the holie Ghost meaneth not to make vs flatterers, or mainteyners of the vices which are in our neighbours, or to make vs Liers: but hee will that wee endeuoue, with all our might, to correct and amend the faultes which are in them: and yet so, that wee beare charitablie with them, without driuing them to despayre, when they shall bee spotted with many vices. For when a man shall see that one disgraceth and shameth him, and that dispitefullie: hee will desperatelie geue himselfe ouer vnto all mischiefe, and harden himselfe therein. Wee are therefore the cause, that those which haue heretofore followed some euill trade of liuing, harden themselues therein, and in despite of God and man, persist in their wickednesse, if rudelie and vndiscretelie, without any affection of charitie, we reprehend them. Wherefore let vs take great heede, that when we reprehend the vices of any, we doe it with such milenesse and gentlenesse, that they which are reproued may know, y for a loue we beare them, we would withdraw them from the way of destruction. And lee why S. James hath applied this place to them, which by gentle corrections, by sweete and amiable words, seeke to draw and allure their neighbours to God. Therefore, when I shall see me leede away vnto wickednesse, if I warne him of his faults, and by admonishing of him, can winne him into the right way: loe (saith he) how this sentence shalbe accomplished, That charitie couereth the multitude of sinnes. I graunt that Solomon speaketh heereof vnto an other ende: but Saint James hath not euill applied this doctrine, signifiyng, that when wee would couer sinnes, it must not bee by closing vppe our eyes, or by not speaking one woorde of them. Therefore, when one shall haue offended GOD by drunkennesse, wee must not dissemble the matter altogether, to couer it by charitie: for this were to practise this doctrine very ill: but wee must rather vse gentle and brotherlie correction, and withall procure, that the vices beeyng buried before God, they be not called to remembrance before men. We must then content our selues, to haue put our neighbours in mind of their faultes, holding alwayes this measure in our reprehensions, that the faltes beeyng corrected and amended, wee defame

Iam. 5, 20.

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not (if wee may possibly choose) them. wo ho must haue some shame for their repentance, but in no wise bee ca st into despaire. But this doctrine is euill practised. For wee see howe wee erre alwayes in both these extremes, and that the meane is neuer kept: namely, to correct the vices by mildnesse and gentlenesse, which wee see in others, and to seeke so to hide them, as yet to remember the offenders of them: howbeit in such sort, that it be not to their reproch and infamy. But what? Wee seeke the loue and fauour of men, and this wee will winne by flattering of them in their sinnes. Wee shall perceiue, howe they offende GOD in one thing or other: this wee let passe. As wee would they should spare vs, so wee will winke at and beare with the euill wee see in our friendes. Yee see then a wicked couerture, wherewith Satan blindeth the eyes of wretched sinners. And wee are the cause hereof, because wee dissemble the faultes which ought to be reproued of vs. But yet, as if this euil sufficed not, the worlde at this day is proceeded so farre herein, that wee shalbe thought not to bee good friends with them, with whom we are ioyned, except wee wil consent vnto al wickednesse for their sakes. And if those, which shall offend herein: yea, so farre that they will not doubt to lend their friend a false othe for his commoditie, shall be reprehended and punished for their periurie: What (will one say) woulde you haue mee to hurt my neighbour? Am I not bound vnto him? And would you haue me depose against him? How should I doe so? Nee, see, at what price we set the veritie and truth of God, see how we turne it into a lie. see also how wee abuse the ordinance and commandement of God, by the which hee hath forbidden vs to defame our neighbours. So let vs learne that this is a wicked extreme, into which wee fall, when wee will beare with that which is euill, when wee will nourish and mainteine vices: and aboue all, when called to giue witnesse, and required truly to declare, and to open the wickednesse, which is to be amended, we wil be culpable therof, and partakers as farre as we may. If I keepe close murder or theft, if I conceale treason, behold I am accounted accessarie vnto al these crimes both before God & before man. So then this which we haue said, that we ought by charitie to couer the sinnes of our neighbors, this I say hindereth not, but that we may declare the euil we know by them, if it bee needefull, and that wee shalbee required thereunto: yea, it shall bee good for vs so to doe. But there is in this thing an other

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vicious extreme, where in we offend: when wee are ouermuch gi-uen to blabbe forth those faults, which ought quietly to bee amended and corrected by vs, without making any greate proclamation of them: and this shal proceede oftentimes from euill will, oftentimes from ambition, and oftentimes from a foolish desire of vaunting our selues. From euill will (I say) when oftentimes vnder a colour of zeale we will seeme to haue to punish vices, pretending that we can not suffer that God be offended, we come to prie into the life of them whome we hate, and if we finde any thing we may grate vppon, any thing we may snappe them vp for, beholde, wee haue an accusation ready: and thus wee falsly abuse the name of God, protesting our selues zealous men, when we seeke nothing else but to catch our enimies, tripping and falling in some one point of their dutie. And a man may easily espie our malice in this, that hauing sharpely reproued a vice in some one, whome wee shall haue hated: wee will beare with it and hide it, as much as wee may possibly, in some one of our friendes: such an vnequal measure wee will vse. Iudge by this, is it not euident, that there is no good affection in vs, and that wee warre not with the sinnes and vices, but with the persons in whome they are? Verily, this case is cleare and easily to bee iudged. Let vs therefore learne, that when we are to discouer the faults and vices which are in others, that our hearts must bee cleare and voide of all euill will, that we may protest before God, that we desire both the profit and welfare of him whom we accuse. Lo, one note to be obserued. And again, we must take heed of al foolish ambition, as I haue touched, that is, that we make not our selues mockers before men, as we see there are some which would make themselues saints in crying out vpon, & ratling vp others for their faults. As soone as they shal see any thing amisse, they must by and by charge a Knell on it, and all the world must knowe he is a zealous fellow: and in the meane time, there is nothing in him but a foolish desire to shew himselfe. For this cause God oftentimes will punishe such a pryde, in as much as men thinke, that if so they haue sharply reproued others, O they are Saints, and in a manner Angels: and in the meane whyle, they dispense with themselues for much wickednes: and when they shall haue offended more grossely than they whome they haue reprehended, they will (forsooth) that men pardon and forgiue them. And why? Because they haue reprehended others to the quicke:

yea, a man shall sée some of these which blushe not to say, What Haue not I reprehended euill? And when I haue behaued my selfe so stoutly, is it not sufficient? Namely, that when this wickednesse was committed, I reproued it, I woulde not suffer it? Well, and if thou couldest not any thing tollerate it in others, how wouldest thou that one should suffer it in thée? If thou haddest in thée but one drop of good affection, wouldest thou not hate the vice in thy selfe, aswell as in another? So then, when wee shall cry out against our neighbors to reproue them, let vs beware we be void of al ambition, if we wil open & discouer the wickednesse wee haue perceiued in another. And let vs obserue this rule. First to beginne with our selues, before we condemne the vices of others, & when we haue diligently sifted & examined what is in vs, then let vs come vnto our neighbors. This is the order we must obserue in our reprehensions, if we wil proceed herein according vnto the wil of God. And note we, that in generall God hath in this place condemned all iniuries, all slaunders, so that if we doe but open our mouth to speake euill, in what sort soeuer, of our neighbours, wée are condemned as false witnesses before God. But by this it is not meant, that we should hide & kéepe close ẏ wickednesse which is manifestly knowẽ: for as we haue before shewed, ẏ vnder this colour of couering of sins, we must not nourish & foster them by flateries or lies: so we must not vnder this shadow, that we are forbiddẽ to hurt our neighbors by word, say, that black is white: & this is diligẽtly to be noted. For there are some which woulde haue nothing cõdemned what euer it be: yea, they would haue men frame their speech so to colour & disguise things, that if they saw theft committed, they should cal it by some other name: they would in no wise, that vices should be condemned by their proper titles. A man shal sée this in many: yea, when one shall sharply reprooue such wicked liuers, as shall not onely haue offended God themselues, but shall bee the cause, that ẏ rest, with whom they liue, shalbe drawẽ vnto a lose and dissolute life, which shalbe as pestilent and infectious sores to rot and corrupt all the rest: when one (I say) shal reprooue them, if he touche them, as he ought, to the quicke, incontinently there shall be some of these nice and delicate felowes, to say, O Sir: shoulde you so speake in the pulpit? A man shall sée blasphemies to reigne, a man shal sée manifest impietie against God and his woorde, a man shall sée such villanous rebellions, as none more: a man shall sée such

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enormious and outragious offences, that it is not possible to beare with them, except a man wil be a traytour to God. And wel, one shal crie out agaynst these thinges, and ye shall haue this replie made: What? Doeth not the Gospell teach you to winne all the world by mildenesse? Hath not Iesus Christ called sinners vnto him in all loue and gentlenesse, pardoning them their trespasses? Must they then which preach the Gospell vse such rigour? Lo, what shalbe sayd: as if Christ would that his grace should be abused, that vices should haue their flote & full saile, that men should dissemble & cloke them, & that they should not be reproued & condemned. Nay, contrariwise, it is saide, that by the Gospell he exerciseth an authoritie & iurisdiction to condemne the whole world: & behold to what purpose this is: namelie, that we should be confounded with shame, & as it were ouerwhelmed with confusion, when our sin shalbe opened & declared to vs, that we haue no other refuge but to his meere grace & onelie mercie. Let vs therefore diligently note, that wee are forbidden to defame our neighbours of hatred & for ill will. But for all this, on the contrarie side, we are commanded to blame the euill we see in them, and to reproue them with sharpnesse, when they shall ouer grossely offende, endeauouring with all our might (if wee may bee able) to winne them to doe well: and withall, not ceasing to aduertise others, not to bee corrupted by wicked examples. This shalbee better vnderstoode if wee shall take vnderyne side the sentence of Iesus Christ, where he sayth, Who soeuer shall haue called his neighbour Foole, shalbe culpable of hell fire: whosoeuer shall haue onely grudged against him, is alreadie damnable: and on the other side, that sentence where it is sayd, That we must reproue the vnfruitfull workes of darknesse, that we must detest and abhorre euill: as Saint Paule speaketh hereof also, when he saith vnto the Corinthians, That if the Gospell be preached, as it ought, they which shall heare it, hauing the secretes of their hearts made manifest, shalbe constreined to giue glorie vnto God, casting themselues to the earth, that is to say, being ashamed of their sinnes. And why? Because they are brought too light, whereas before they were hidden, when their sinnes were not knowen: they see that they are defamed before God, and there is no talke of hiding themselues anie longer. Therefore when I shal haue grouned of euill will against my neighbour, yea, albeit so closely, that one cannot say, that I haue called him knaue or foole, but shall

Mar. 5. 22.

Eph. 5. 11.

1. Cor. 14. 25.

anelie haue wagged my heade, or bit my lippes at him. Loe, a falſe witneſſe bearing before God. And why? For I deſpiſe my neighbour, I deſire alſo to put him to reproche and infamie. And what hath ſtirred me hereunto? Some grudge I beare him, ſome euill will I haue conceiued againſt him. Now contrariwiſe, when I will aduertiſe my neighbour, ſo that I ſhall ſeeke to doe him good, that I ſhalbe led by no euil affection, but that I woulde procure his ſaluation as farre as lieth in mee, I may ſay, Vnhappie man that thou art, take heed to thy ſelfe, it ſeemeth thou wouldeſt ſell thy ſelf vnto Satan, it ſeemeth thou wouldeſt captiue thy ſelfe vnder his curſed ſeruitude and bondage: thou ſheweſt well that thou art paſt all ſenſe, and enraged, when thou wilt receiue no admonitiõ, regard no warning: wilt thou needes periſh miſchiewouſly and miſerably? Goe caytiue: thou art worthy to be hated and ſhat at of all men. I may vſe to ſay al theſe words with a man, and yet doe him no iniurie. And why? For I cannot otherwiſe bring him to himſelfe, to amende him. Therfore, when I ſee that Sathan hath ſo hardened him, that I muſt hammer him with great blowes to awaken him, I may here proceede with ſuch vehemencie of wordes, and beholde alſo how I ſhall ſeeke hereby to couer his faultes. For what other end and purpoſe haue I? What other thing ſhote I at, but that they ſhould be pardoned him of God, and that before the world he ſhould no longer be defamed and made a reproch? It grieueth me that men point at him with their fingers, that he is become a reproch and byworde to all, that he is as it were on a ſcaffold or ſtage expoſed to all ignominie and ſhame. This griueth me (I ſay) and therfore I ſeeke to bring him into the right way, ſo that I vſe no iniurie towardes him, in this maner of proceeding which I obſerue. Nowe, in the meane time we muſt take heede, that we looſe not the bridle to any exceſſiue bitternelle of reprehending. For albeit we haue a good zeale, & are not moued with any ill will: yet notwithſtanding, we ſhal very much offẽd, when we ſhalbe ouer bitter in reproouing. Loe, why Saint Paule expreſly warneth vs of this, that we reproue with all gentleneſſe thoſe which haue offended. Conſider, ſaith he, that thou maiſt alſo fall and offend. Let vs therfore vſe ſuch mildneſſe and gentleneſſe towardes our neighbours, as we would be vſed towards vs in the like caſe. But how euer it be, let vs ſpeake of vices ſo, that we diſguiſe them not, to make them ſeeme nothing, & let vs ſeek roughly to reforme them which haue offended:

Gal. 6. 1.

reprouing them in such sort, as they are able to beare, and as we see them disposed: regarding alwayes, that we be moued hereto by charitie and brotherlie loue. And so, when we shall pray God to conduct vs in this thing, and to gouerne vs by his holie spirit, a man shal not be able to count it an iniurie done to him, whē we shal haue told him of his faultes roundly, and yet charitably. Ye see then what we haue to obserue touching this commandement: namely, that we must not open our mouth to speake one word slaunderously, and maliciously, against our neighbour: and yet in the meane time, that we reproue simply and plainly, such as shall haue offended, as we woulde men should haue a care to correct and amend vs in the like case. Whē we shall vse such equitie and discreete dealing: beholde, we shall not bee false witnesses. Moreouer, let vs note, that when mention is made here of falshode, we are not only forbidden to forge and inuent a lie, in such sort, that that we shal say, be falsly contriued & deuised without any colour at all: but if we maliciously deprave that which in it selfe is not euil, we beare herein false witnesse. As it is said, that they which deposed against our Lorde Jesus Christ, that he had said, Destroy this Temple, and in three dayes I will build it vp againe, were false witnesses, and yet it is certein, that Jesus Christ had so spoken: that is to say, had pronounced these verie wordes with his mouth. They then which recite them, why are they called false witnesses? The reason is, because they turned the wordes of the sonne of God into an other sense than he had spoken them: and so sought to bring him into hatred, charging him with so wicked a slaunder, as if he had spoken of the materiall temple of Pierusalem, when he spake of his owne body, which was the true temple, in the which dwelt al the fulnesse of the Godhead: for hee was God manifested in the fleshe. So then, we see that the falshode which God here condemneth, is not then only committed, when we contriue a lie, whē we forge that which was neuer said or done, whē we deuise a tale neuer known or heard of before: but then also, when we shal haue maliciously disguised and altered a matter which might bee well interpreted, turning it to an euill sense, when it might be wel meant: and herein we be false witnesses. For example. There are some so wayward and ouerthwart, that as soone as they perceiue any thing which displeaseth them, albeit it haue no euill at all in it, neither against God, neither against man: yet are they readie to make an accusation therof, and to say, O

Mat. 26. 60.

1. Tim. 3. 16.

se such a man hath spoken or done suche a thing, so that a man shall not haue giuen. I know not what the smallest blot that may be, but that which was a vertue shalbe taken for a vice. So then, when we shall haue inuested and depraued for one onely word, that which hath bene well saide: loe, we charge a man with euill, we hurt his good name, & harme him in his reputation. Let vs therfore note that we are false witnesses, not only whē we forge & inuent that which hath neuer bene done or spoken: but when by anie subtile cauil, by any euill & sinister interpretation, we shal turne that to euil which might haue bene wel taken. Now, as I haue said, this is oftentimes done, when men are too reprehensiue & ouer captious, when they are wayward & frowardly bent: for then will they turne all to ill. It is saide, That charitie is not suspicious (as S. Paule hath spoken hereof) and that we must know the euil before we condemne it. It is verie true, that we may bee often times deceiued in iudging of that which is good, and that which is euil: but when there shalbe such signes and markes, that the things shalbe so manifest, that we may be bold to say: Behold a wicked thing, yet if we be ouermuch bent to snatch at it, we may offend. And aboue al, whē we haue so malicious a nature, as to backbite & to slander mē for we know not what, know we that we are chapmuen as false witnesses before God. Now if those which on some occasion giuen haue shewen themselues hardie & bold in reprehending, are yet to be condemned, because they haue proceeded therin ouer rigorously: what shall be said of them, which of manifest hatred will peruert that which hath bin done or spoken, which ought notwithstanding to haue bene wel taken, & wherein there shalbe no manifest vice? If they will peruert & deprane it by their ill & wicked handling, are they not false witnesses before God? So then, let vs lerne, so to procure the honor & profit of our neighbors, that alwayes we haue a regard vnto it in our talking. Be it thē that we reprehend them be it that we speake of their vices, to the end they may be punished for them, & that they which might be seduced & led vnto euill by their wicked example, be not peruerted: let vs neuertheless alwayes haue this regard, to procure their profite & welfare as much as in vs lieth. And let vs alwaies obserue this measure in reprouing that we defame not men in such sort, that they be wholy discouraged to return to doe well. For we ought rather to burie their vices as much as we may, both before God & before men, that they may cal to minde their duti, & not lose all shame to giue ouer themselues inordinately vnto

1. Cor. 13. 5.

all

all wickednesse. Thus yee see in what sort we ought to procure their
good. Now, if we wil, as we ought, obserue this which is here contai-
ned, we must come to an higher point & principle: namely, to cōsider
why God hath made our tong, & for what cause he hath bestowed on
vs ẏ gift of speaking, knowing he hath granted it vs to this end, that
we might cōmunicate togither. Now the cōmunication which is be-
twene mankind, what other end ought it to haue thā to maintain vs
in charity? We must therfore briefly lerne, so to bridle our tongues,
that the vnitie & peace which God commandeth that we haue amōg
vs, be always kept & nourished asmuch as is possible. And lo why S. *Iohn. 13. 6.*
James vseth such vehemency when he mentioneth euil speeches: hee
saith that the tōgue which is but a smal portion of the body, & a litle
morsel of flesh, kindleth notwithstanding such a fire, as might burne
the greatest & thickest forests in the world. Let vs therfore returne to
this principle: namely, to know that God hath bestowed on vs a sin-
gular benefite, in giuing vs the meane to be able to cōmen & conferre
togither. Lo the thoughts & affections of men are secret & hidden, &
the tongue which openeth and displaieth the secrets of the hart. Let
vs therfore consider diligently how to vse wel so great a benefite, let
vs beware how we defile our tong with our vices & wickednes, see-
ing God hath giuen it to nourish a loue & brotherhood among vs: let
vs take heed we abuse it not to babble & prattle of this & that, so as to
turne our speeches to ill purposes, to be empoisoned one against ano-
ther. Behold what is the point whereunto we must come. Now seing
we haue in general known how we shal auoid this vice of being false
witnesses, because this is an hard matter to bridle our tōgues, let vs
trauel herein with so much the greater diligence. We see how many
ill speeches easily escape vs, & when we haue spoken at rouers, with-
out any thinking what we say, because we are so accustomed here vn-
to we thinke it no vice before God. But let vs note, ẏ ẏ more we are
by nature inclined to speake vndiscretly, to reproch & backbite our
neighbours, the more paines we must bestowe to represse, and bridle
our tongues. For if we be giuen to any sin, this inclination & accu-
stoming our selues vnto it, shal not serue vs for an excuse before god.
Nay, when wee shall haue knowne any vice to bee in vs, wee must
bee so farre off from flattering our selues heerein, that wee ought to
sigh and say: Alas, I see this vice reigneth ouer much in mee,
I must therefore more manfully warre against it, and force
my selfe, through the grace of my GOD, so farre as to represse

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in me, that thing which I sée God condemneth. And to be the more héedful in this thing, let vs thinke on the manace and threat he gaue against it. For when Saint Paule saith, That neither fornicatours, nor drunkards, nor extortioners, nor murderers, shall inherite the kingdom of heauen, & numbreth also among them, railers, euil speakers, banishing them in like maner from all hope of euerlasting life and saluation: when we heare this, is there any talke to be had of couering vs with leaues, to make our selues beleue there is no il done, when we shal haue slaundered our neighbours? Thinke we that the threat which God hath pronounced by the mouth of Saint Paule, is onely to feare little children, and that it shall not bée executed vppon them, which would exempt themselues from it in despite of him? So then let vs labour with all our diligence, to obserue this commandement. And aboue all (that wée may conclude herewith) let vs make this comparison, that if God will that the good name of our neighbours be kept and estéemed deare of vs, and if he so streightly forbid vs al ill reproches and slaunders, which might disgrace and discredite him, how ought we to behaue our selues towards him? Are wée not an hundred times more bound to maintaine the honour of God? And because we cannot profite him any way, are we not much more bound hereunto, than to conserue in his entire estate the honour of men? So then let vs beware of being false witnesses against God: as S. Paule saith, That they which corrupt the puritie of the Gospel, are false witnesses against God, and not against men. What must he done then? The truth of God must be maintained by vs, we must proceede therein roundly and vprightly: when wée shall sée a good doctrine, we must defend and sustaine it, knowing that God appointeth vs as his Proctors and Atturnies. Shal I then sée a trueth borne downe and oppressed? I must not suffer this as much as in me lieth. And why? For God calleth mée to procure in his name, that an vntruth be repressed, and borne to the grounde. And this ought to be obserued, especially when the question is concerning the doctrine of saluation. So that when we shal sée that this doctrine shalbe falsified, & that men would herein mingle their leuen, to corrupt others with their falshoode and lying, we must here shewe our selues trulie zealous, not to suffer false witnesses against god, to haue their sway: except we wil be consenting with them, and partakers of their wickednesse, as I haue already declared. And so let vs learne, that when

1. Cor. 6. 10.

1. Cor. 15. 15.

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we shal haue liued with men in such simplicitie, that a man shal not be able to charge vs, that by backbitings, lies, or slaunders, we haue discredited any one: we must also haue this zeale towards GOD, that his trueth remaine in his entire and perfect estate, and that it be mainteined so, that it may reigne and beare rule among vs. Ye se in effect what we haue to consider vpon this commaundement.

Nowe let vs cast our selues downe before the face of our good God, with acknowledging of our sinnes, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done, that we may be led further and further vnto suche a repentance, as we may learne to consider of our vices, to be sorie for them, and to be displeased with our selues, to the end, that hauing obteined forgiuenesse of them, we may learne to order our life after his commandementes, that he may be honoured of vs in all true obedience, and not onlie by confession of mouth. That it will please him to graunt his grace not onelie vnto vs, but to all people and nations of the earth, &c.

The 12. Sermon.

Deut. Chap. 5.

21 Thou shalt not couet thy neighbours wife, neither shalt thou desire thy neighbours house, nor his fielde, nor his manseruant, nor his maide, nor his oxe, nor his asse, nor any thing that is his.

IT might seeme at the first sight, that this commaundement is superfluous, because that God hauing condemned theft and adulterie, would there also represse all wicked concupiscences and desires. For we haue saide, that these commaundementes must bee expounded of vs, according to the nature of God. And we knowe, that the proper office of God is, to sounde our hearts, that he onelie knoweth the thoughtes which are secret and hid:

bid, and therefore it followeth, that when God forbiddeth men to bée théeues and adulterers, he would bridle their affections and desires. And in verie déede if this were not, God should haue no more power in making and prescribing of lawes than mortal men. For an earthlie man, if he condemne adulterie, he wil also condemne the act and déede thereof: yea, if an euill intent and meaning appeare, it shall be punished. If the lawe of God were such, it should import no great thing. For it should be but a policie, that is, a rule of order to gouerne vs honestlie before men. But there is in it much more. As we
1. Tim. 1. 5. sée that S. Paule saieth, That the law cannot bée kept and obserued without a pure conscience and a faith vnfeigned. If it be then required, that we haue such a soundnesse for to obserue rightlie, and as we ought, the lawe of God: it followeth, that vnder the name of adulterie, al wicked lusts and desires are forbidden, and so likewise vnder the name of theft. Wee might also alledge to this purpose the authoritie of our Lorde Iesus Christ, who is a faithfull interpreter of the lawe. For it is by his spirite that Moses and all the Prophets haue spoken. Why then is it now added, that we must not couet or desire? If mention hath bene alreadie made of all wicked desires, was there any néede that this should be againe repeated? Wée must therefore note for answere hereunto, that God in this place would not represse such wicked affections and desires as are alreadie resolute and concluded vpon of vs, but those affections which do first pricke and sting vs vp, albeit we cleaue not, nor consent vnto them. This requireth a more ample and familiar exposition. Sometimes to couet, importeth the will which is in a man, as when I shal cast mine eye on the goodes of my neighbour, if I shall be tempted to couetousnesse, and that I nourish such a temptation in me, and giue my selfe the bridle: loe sinne hath wonne so much, that I haue a resolute wil in me, that I could wish well that this should be mine. Loe then one kind of desire which importeth withall a will, when a man shal consent vnto sinne, and if hée had the meane, he would put in practise his wicked wil and purpose which he hath conceiued. Now such wicked desires haue bene alreadie forbidden, when it hath bene said, Thou shalt not steale: Thou shalt not commit adulterie. For God hath not only forbidden the act of fornication & stealing, but to desire and lust after, either the wife of an other, or his goods & substaunce. But there are other desires and lusts, to the which we cleaue not at all, to cõsent vn-

to them, which oftentimes tickle and stirre vs vp, and wee perceiue some motion in vs which is against God, and is rebellious to the integritie and vprightnes which is contained in the law, and such desires are forbidden in this place. So wee see, that God, not without cause, hauing condemned al euill desires and affections, answereth, that this is not yet such a perfection as he requireth: but wee must know that euery affection which stirreth vs vp vnto euil, albeit wee conclude not any thing within our selues, neither rest our selues on it, that if only a concupiscence forceably breake forth in vs, and wee strine therewith, that this is a sinne committed: we are culpable before God. And thus wee see what integritie is required in this place when our Lord hauing forbidde wicked desires, adioineth that both our senses and minds must be locked vp in such sort vnder his feare, and inflamed with such a loue and desire, to walke in all holinesse, that we be not moued or driue either on one side or other by any wicked passion, to desire either the good or the wife of another. Now seeing we haue the intent and meaning of God, let vs diligently consider wherunto he bindeth vs. For the law ought to serue vs for a looking glasse, to behold the pouertie and miserie which is in vs: and after that we shal haue vnderstood what our dutie is, let vs know that we are to be condemned, if we come not neere that perfection, to the which God hath called vs. We see wherupon we must stay to make our profite of this last commaundement of the lawe. And to the ende that we may be so much the more attentiue, and that we may know that this is a doctrine which requireth, that we apply our whole studies therein, let vs beare in minde that which S. Paule saith, That being reputed a great and exceeding wise Doctor, hauing bin nourished in the law of God from his infancie, yet was he so blind, that he vnderstoode not what the lawe of God ment, vntill he was conuerted, and that our Lorde Iesus Christ had enlightened him by his Gospel, to the end he might knowe whither the law of God ought to lead vs. *Phil. 3. 5.*

Beholde then Saint Paule, who was instructed in such sorte, that hee was in great reputation among men, not among the Painims, to say, that he was some great Philosopher: but hee was taught and brought vp in the lawe of GOD. And touching his life, hee protesteth, that hee liued irreprehensible, as without all fault before men: Loe, I say, Saint Paule

an holy and learned personage after the commõ estimation of men, but yet a poore beast touching the law of God. And why? He saith, he estéemed himselfe liuing, & that he thought himselfe iust before God, and knew not that he had néede of the mercy which GOD offereth vnto al sinners. For he abstained from theft, frõ fornication, & such like things: hee had no wicked desires in him which one might perceiue, and which might be knowen vnto men, so that he iustified himselfe in his owne fantasie. Now in the end, when God had taken pitie on him, he opened his eyes, & made him to vnderstand that which is conteined in this last commandement, Thou shalt not couet. Behold how S. Paul began now first to vnderstand the lawe, in which before he was a doctor, making profession thereof, wherein hee had bene taught and instructed from his first age. Until hee had wel considered and meditated of this, he tript ouer the quicke coles, hee learned his lesson (as we say) by rote, he neuer tasted nor vnderstood the force and power of the lawe, he neuer knewe that this was sinne, to condemne himselfe before God, and to haue his refuge to his mercy, in the which the hope of our saluation lieth, and whereupon it ought to be grounded. Séeing then S. Paul knew not the lawe, and had no right vnderstanding thereof, but by this worde: let vs labour herein with so much the more diligence: and séeing that all the tyme of his life, vntil his conuersion, he was so blind, that he vnderstood not this worde: by so much the more ought wee to bée attentiue in this place, for we are of no greater abilitie than hee: but God by his holy spirit must reueale to vs what this concupiscence is, which hée hath in this place condemned. Now beyond all this, we must haue an other admonition which is very needful and necessarie for vs. For the Diuel hath sought in such sort to couer and hide this precept, that a man should not know the intent and meaning of God, but that one shoulde lightly content himself, to condemne onely those euill concupiscences for sinne, which appeared manifestly, and wherof a man were plainly conuicted. So that many haue restrained this worde of concupiscence to those euil affections and desires, which importe a resolute will and full consent. Now this is against the natural sense and meaning of Moses: and yet is this a doctrine fully concluded on in Papistrie. Although the Papistes cannot deny, that to be pricked and prouoked with an euil & wicked desire, is a damnable vice, and which proceedeth from original sinne, and from this corruption

which we drawe from our father Adam: yet they imagine that after baptisme this is no more a sinne. As if such a fantasie come into the minde of man, to doubt the promises of God, to murmure against him, to bee angry with him: when a man shalbe afflicted, if it come into his fantasie to accuse God of iniustice and crueltie, this is not a sinne, say the Papists. Neither are these of the rudest & ignorantest sort among them which speake thus, but this is a general resolution & doctrine vniuersally concluded on in al their diuelish Synagogues. There is not a Synagogue among thē, where this hath not ben receiued as an article of faith: namely, that a man being prouoked and stirred vp with some wicked desire, sinneth not, that if he be tempted in himselfe to commit murther, to empoyson any, to commit fornication, and briefly, to be guiltie of al the crimes and enormities in the world: if so that he consent and assent not thereto, (for loe the words which they vse) that is to say, if hee resolue not himselfe herein, to say, I wil put in practise my wicked conceit, and that hee stay not himselfe hereon to please himselfe in this wicked affection, al this is no sinne. This is, say they, but to exercise vs in combate and fight against sinne, and we then declare that we are valiant champions, & that sinne beareth not rule ouer vs, or reigneth in vs. Now I graut it is true, that the faithful shewe well that the spirit of God reigneth in them, when they repel and beate backe such temptations, when they bridle and captiue themselues so, when they resist & withstande such things, knowing that they are contrary vnto God, and that hee condemneth them. It is certaine that hereby it is shewed, that God hath giuen vs victorie ouer sinne, and that the vertue and power of his spirit abideth in vs, and that we are stout and valiant Champions to bid battell against Sathan. But this is not to say, that we are exempted and freed from al fault, and that we may so plucke out of vs all sinne, and ransome our selues so fully, as if it might not staine and spot vs no longer. Alas, we are farre wide from this. For on the one side it is true, that we haue great cause to praise God, that he bestoweth this grace on vs by his holy spirit, to surmount & ouercome all wicked affections. But in the meane time, wee ought to bewaile our selues, knowing that we are on our part ouerweake, and that if he take not pitie on vs, forasmuch as we haue within vs an euil and wicked conscience, which is to prouoke his vengeaunce against vs, we should wel deserue to be throwen downe of him into the bottom-

lesse pit of hel. But let vs note how God woulde heere open and discouer the shame and reproche of the Papists, & how he would shewe that the greatest Clerkes among them, are more rude and ignorant than the poore vnbeleeuers which neuer heard one worde of the holy scripture. And why? For let vs consider of that which is contayned in the lawe. It is said, that the summe of the lawe is, That we loue God with al our heart, with al our minde, with all our vnderstanding, with all the faculties and powers we haue. If it were saide, Thou shalt loue God with al thine heart, a man might with some colour conclude, that there is no sinne, but when the will is certaine and resolute. For the hearte in the Scripture, although it signifie sometime the vnderstanding, yet is it taken for the will. Now then, one might vse this cauil: It is said, That we must loue God with al our heart, if so be then our will be not contrary, well, it is ynough, we haue quited our selues before God. For one might happily restraine the will from consenting to this wicked affection, and so it should seeme that the wicked desires which first incite and stirre vs vp, and yet hold vs not captiues, be not comprised vnder sinne. But God addeth, With all thy heart, with all thy vnderstanding and thoughtes, and with all thy powers.

Deu. 6, 5. Mat. 22. 37.

Let vs now consider, if I conceiue any thing against God, if I conceiue any euil lust or desire of fornication or stealing, albeit I cleaue not at al vnto it, whether one part of my soule & vnderstanding bee not already corrupted, and whether I loue God with all my heart, when one parte of my vnderstanding is bent against him? There is no question of the heart, but of this apprehension and conceiuing of the minde, which is in the soule of man. Nowe I shewe well that there is vanitie in this, that the feare of God withholdeth me not as it ought. It followeth then, that I am culpable and condemned, because I discharge not my selfe in loving GOD, as hee hath commaunded mee. And againe, is there not some vertue and power of my soule which applieth not it selfe to thinke on this or that, which is contrary vnto GOD and his iustice? So then, wee see that euill and wicked thoughtes are condemned, and that wee cannot so excuse them, but that GOD shal worthily punishe vs for them. And let vs knowe, that albeeit men neuer consent vnto euill, to haue their wil resolutely bent thereunto: yet cease they not to bee accursed before GOD, if hee woulde vse his seueritie against them.

Now

Nowe therefore wée haue the true sense and meaning, and wée sée withall, that wée must take diligent héede to this place, that we bée not seduced and abused herein. And the example of Saint Paule ought to pricke vs forwarde so much the more, seeing that he confesseth that hée was ignorannt of the lawe of GOD, vntill our Lorde Jesus Christ had enlightened him by his holy spirite, to the ende hée might knowe what this worde of concupiscence imported. It remaineth that we now applie this which hath bene touched to our vse and profite.

In the first place therefore let vs learne, that to serue God well, and as we ought, we must not onelie desire to doe well, neither is it sufficient that we profit herein, and proceede effectually: but we must purge our selues of all euill and wicked affections, and of all corrupt thoughts, in such sort, that al our senses & vnderstanding tend to this ende, to giue ouer our selues fullie & wholie vnto God, that we may shew wée haue not bene so distracted, as to bende on one side or other: but that wée bee helde vp so streight, as to runne without being hindered or staied: yea, to runne in that way, which God sheweth vs, so that there bée in vs nothing, but all puritie: and when we shall haue well and throughlie vnderstood this, wée shalbe aduertised to bée watchfull, and to stande on our garde. For wée sée howe men wander, and leade them selues astray. And what is the cause hereof? Because they reckon (as wée say) without their hoste. For they expounde the lawe of GOD after their owne fansie, and they thinke it sufficient, if their will bée not wicked, and that they rest not them selues on their euill thoughtes. Well, God will not impute this vnto vs, say they: and hereuppon they walke on in their wicked concupiscences, and they haue an headbande which they put before their eyes, that they might not knowe howe closely they detein them selues. Now when men speake thus, yet this will not serue them to escape the hande of the heauenlie Judge. Let vs therefore take diligent héede, we restraine our selues in our concupiscences. For God hath not onelie condemned wicked intentes and purposes, but al desires also, which prouoke vs to euil, and driue vs thereunto. Let vs therefore walke in so much the greater feare, let euerie one hold himself, as it were vnder lock, forasmuch as there is no part in vs, which is not infected with sinne. For let vs examine all the fault of our soules, and we shal finde sinne dispersed ouer all:

as when a poison hath entred the bodie of a man, so that euerie part thereof is infected. There is in vs such an vniuersall leprosie, as possesseth both the bones and the marrowe, the thoughts and the affections, and all which is in vs. Seeing then it is so, that our nature is thus corrupted, ought wee not to be so much the more vigilant and watchful to hold our selues in bridle, seeing God by the law hath condemned all wicked thoughts, which tend to incite vs vnto euill, seeing hee hath condemned the smallest motion which flattereth & tickleth vs, and when we onelie feele our will a little pricked and stirred, albeit it be not at all held captiue? When we see this (I saie) haue we not great occasion to awaken vs to walke vnder the hand of God, in so much the greater heedefulnesse? So then behold howe this precept ought to awaken vs, when wee are so sleepie and slouthfull, and would so easilie acquite our selues of our duetie towardes God. But let vs knowe, that no such shiftes will serue vs to escape. And why? God followeth on alwayes to condemne wicked desires, hauing condemned wicked counsels and purposes. Nowe this doctrine ought to serue two wayes to our vse and profite. First, it may teach vs more feruently to pray vnto God to gouerne vs by his holy spirite, and to purge vs from all our corruptions and vices. And again, hauing made our request and prayer vnto him, that euery one force himselfe, that we vse violence with our nature, with al our senses and appetites, seeing there is in vs suche a rebellion against the law of God. As S. Paule also speaketh not onelie of the wils of men,
Rom. 8. 7. when he saith, That through their peruerse and crooked nature, they are enemies vnto God: but he mentioneth the affections & thoughts, for he vseth a word in that place which signifieth the thoughts which we conceiue. Seeing it is so, let vs knowe, that when we shall haue bestowed our labour wel, to hold our selues snaffled with the bridle of God, that yet some euil desires shal escape vs, for which we ought to lament and bewaile our selues before God. Loe what the first vse of this doctrine is: namelie, that we haue this zeale to call vpon God to gouerne vs by his holie spirite, and that we employ all our paines herein, and vse such force with our selues to be retained from al euil, that Sathan haue not his entrance into our heartes, that he may not make any breach into vs, to winne possession of our bodies: but that we keepe him alwse and farre off. And as soone as we shall perceiue any thought in vs, which shall tende vnto euill, let vs come forth to

oppose

oppose our selues against it, let vs make this barre, to say, That God must beare rule whole in thée, he must possesse not onelie thy minde, but all thy senses & thoughts. For the second, we must learne to condemne our selues, & giue al glorie vnto God, in confessing that we are all culpable & guiltie, and that if he call vs to account, & shall vse severitie with vs, loe we al perish and are cast downe to the bottomlesse pitte of hell. We must come vnto this point, otherwise we shall not profite in the lawe of God, as wée ought. But heere a man may demaund, seeing that God knoweth the frailtie and weakenesse of men, Why he either strengtheneth not them better, or why he maketh a lawe so straite and so austere: For it seemeth that God would oppresse vs, when he forbiddeth wicked desires, and that he is not content that we render him obedience in our wils, enioyning vs no further thing by adding this worde. And loe why these teachers say, That God would spite and anger men in his law, and as it were forbid them to scratch themselues when they itch. But we must come to knowe this miserie and wretchednesse which is in vs: namely, that we haue neither thoughtes nor affections, which are not rebellious vnto God. Let vs not therefore marueil, if there be such a strife and combate betweene the lawe of God, and our lustes and appetites. And why? For when we haue diligently sifted and examined whatsoeuer is within vs, we shal finde there is nothing but all manner of corruption and damnable wickednesse. For we cannot conceiue one onelie thought which tendeth not vnto euill. Seeing it is so with vs, and that God hath giuen vs a perfect rule of all godnesse and vpright liuing, hath hée not as it were thundered against vs? And is it not manifest, that the fire and the water are at lesse strife, yea, agrée better, than the nature of men, and the iustice of God? Let vs not therefore thinke it straunge, that God hath so reproued our appetites and lustes: and when we heare the blasphemies which these teachers spue forth, let vs detest them as monsters. For in steade of glorifying of GOD in his iustice, they fling themselues and spurne against him, as sauage and furious beastes. Loe what we haue to note touching the frailtie and weakenesse of men: that albeit it bée so great: yet he condemneth it in his lawe. And why? For when GOD ordereth our life, and sheweth vs howe we are to walke, hée hath not respect what we can doe: but hée considereth of that we owe him, he respecteth what vprightnesse and in-

nocencie of liuing is, though it be not founs in vs. We are the creatures of GOD: ought we not then to giue ouer our selues wholie to his seruice? Without all doubt we ought: for this is a peremptorie reason: and can not be gainesaide. And men may well mutter and murmure hereat, yet shall they alwayes bee conuicted with so manifest a proofe, that hauing their beeing of GOD, and for him, they ought to dedicate vnto him all their senses and affections, and whatsoeuer there is either in their bodie or their soule. Howe withall let vs note diligently, that we cannot acquite vs of our duetie towardes him. But where is the cause hereof, but in our owne nature? But this we drawe from Adam. It followeth not, for that we are held captiues vnder sinne, and that this cursed seruitude and bondage hindereth vs from doing well; and maketh vs giue our selues altogether vnto that which is euill, what euer other cause be hereof, the roote is in vs, and euerie one shall finde himselfe culpable. And we must not say, that we are driuen hereunto by anie external force, but euerie one is leade and drawen vnto this by his owne proper concupiscence, and so there remaineth no excuse for vs. And hereby we see that we must not measure the law of God by our owne faculties and powers. And why? God respecteth not what we can doe, or what our power and abilitie is: but he respecteth howe farre we are bound vnto him, he respecteth this integritie and perfection, which is without vs. Behold what we haue to obserue. And this is that which abuseth and deceiueth the Papistes. For they haue this principle among them, That the law of God is not impossible vnto men. It is wonderful how they haue bin so mad, how the deuil hath inchanted and bewitched them in such sort. For this doctrine is most cleare and manifest throughout all the holie scripture: namely, that men shall bee alwayes condemned by the lawe, and must alwayes haue recourse to the meere grace and mercie of God. When Saint Paul will proue that men are accursed being sinners, and that there is not at all one iust man, what argument or reason is it which he vseth? He alledgeth the place of Moses: Cursed is euerie man that continueth not in all thinges which are written in the booke of the law to do them. Now it might seeme at first sight, that Saint Paule hath euill argued, and that this reason is impertinent. For let it be granted, that all they which haue transgressed the lawe of God, are accursed: yet it followeth not, that all mankinde be cursed. For

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Gal. 3. 10.

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If one man obserue the lawe, and acquite himselfe herein: loe he is exempted out of this condemnation. Some then shalbe found which shal haue obserued the law of God, and therefore all are not cursed. But Saint Paule presupposeth that the law is impossible, and if he had not take this as graunted, he might seeme to haue proceeded in his argument without sense or reason. Thus we see that the Papists haue taken and grounded themselues vpon a principle and grounde, altogether contrary to the spirite of God: yea, they are so rude and ignoraunt, that they haue not yet learned and vnderstood the A B C of faith, and of Christian religion. So then, let vs diligently note, that when question is of the lawe of God, we must not measure it by our strength and power, to respect what we are able to doe: but wee must consider what we owe vnto God. Yea, but what then shall be the meane to deliuer vs from the curse of the lawe? For it seemeth vnto them, that all the world must needes be damned. I graunt it well, & it behoueth it bee so, that is, that we be all damned, if we will haue saluation in Christ Iesus. For how shall wee seeke vnto the grace and mercie of God, except we know the want and need we haue thereof? Men would not seeme beggers by their good will. But as long as we shal thinke anie iustice to be in vs, we shall neuer haue any cause to seeke it elsewhere than in our selues, and therefore we must bee wholy rid of all opinion of our owne vertues, we must perceiue the wrath of God which is bent against vs, we must feele the weight and burthen of death, which lieth on and presseth vs. For without this, it cannot be that we shalbe able to prepare our selues to obtein mercie at the hand of God. But this thing requireth a more large and ample declaration. Let vs therefore first of all beare in minde, that when wee feele anie euill thought to arise in vs, and that our appetites and lustes, with any pleasant motion, shall tickle and stirre vs vp vnto euill, that wee bee culpable and also guiltie of sinne before GOD. But heere one may demaunde this question, Whether, if when a man conceiueth a wicked thought, and he bee so farre from resting on it, that hee detesteth it before hee feele any pricke and prouocation thereof, whether this bee sinne? As there are very many thoughtes, which touche not our hearte, which moue vs not at all, which ingender and breede no wicked lust in vs: yea, a man may haue some thought arise, being vs

if were halfe a sleepe: and wel, this slitteth from him without mouing the heart, or drawing anie lust after it: and yet for this we must lament and bewayle our selues before God, and knowe, that except GOD stayed vs by his grace, we haue opened the doore to Satan, whereat entring in, he might incontinently winne vs vnto further wickednesse. We must therefore be sorie for this thing, albeit God imputeth it not vnto vs for sinne. But there is nowe a second degree, when not onely we conceiue some wicked thing in our minde, moued hereunto by some present obiect: but when we shalbe thereby something moued, that we shal feele some pricke of Satan, which stirreth vs, then is sinne conceiued, that is to say, although there be no consent giuen: and albeit the will be not resolute herein, yet is sinne formed before God, and it is damnable in his sight. For to haue this better vnderstood, we must alledge examples hereof. It may so happen, that a man beholding eyther the house or the lands of an other, conceiueth some lying fantasie, and yet his hearte is nothing moued herewith, he hath no such desire breede in him as to say, I would this were mine: but he passeth from this thought, and seeth it is but a vanitie: he could not withstande it from arising in him.

But albeit there be not herein any wicked affection and desire, yet notwithstanding, GOD doth hereby warne vs of our infirmitie and weakenesse. And here must hereupon humble and bewayle our selues, and acknowledge that this is alreadie a sinne, for which we were to be condemned. For let vs consider whether this shall bee founde in the Angels of heauen. It is most certayne it shal not bee seene in them. And yet the iustice and righteousnesse of Angels, shal hardly suffice to satisfie and answeare the lawe of GOD. True it is, that there is in God an other iustice, as we haue seene in the bookes of Iob, which surpasseth and exceedeth this of the lawe: but if the Angels of heauen applie themselues to fulfill the lawe of GOD, without doubt it is al they are able to doe, to conforme themselues to the rule which hee heere prescribeth vs. We se then, that this is a vice, for which men ought to condemne themselues: not when they shall haue hadde anie occasion offered, whereby some wicked affection might arise: but when they shall haue breede in them suche a desire, as to say, I could

wish this or that. Although a man incontinently repelleth such a desire, and stayeth nothing at al vpon it, yet is he culpable of this couetousnesse which is here mentioned. Now, seeing this is so, let vs learne altogether to condemne our selues: and againe, let vs beware we fal not unto a double condemnation, when we shal not only haue coueted something to prouoke vs vnto euil, but shall haue nourished this desire: as when a woman hath conceiued, shee nourisheth her childe vntill she bring him forth: for when wee shall haue loosed the bridle to our wicked lustes and desires, so farre, as that our will be wonne, in so much that we rest our selues on wickednesse, to giue our full consent thereunto, behold how we incurre a double condemnation: and then must we with more and greater teares bewaile our miserie: for we see we haue brought two condemnations vppon our heads, except God of his infinite mercy and godnesse beare with vs. Loe, what wee haue here to note touching euill and wicked thoughtes. Nowe withall we must returne to consider of the remedie we haue herein: for we were in a desperate case, as being vtterly confounded, if wee had not this grace and mercy of God, whereby we are succoured and relieued. Therfore, when we shal haue vnderstand and confessed, that we are in all sorties that may be culpable, beholde, God calleth and sheweth vs, that of these so many wicked desires which are in vs, although in their owne nature they are sinne: yet will he not impute any of them vnto vs for sinne. Is then a wicked desire reputed sinne in the faythful? No. But here twoo diuers things are to be considered. For if we respect the nature of the vice, it is alwayes sinne. But doeth God pardon it? Why then beholde, he calleth none of these euill concupiscences vnto account, forasmuch as by his free mercie and godnesse hee pardoneth them vntoo the faithful. Ale knowe also, that by the blood of Jesus Christ, all our spottes are washed and wiped out: and baptisme is hereof a sure testimonie and witnesse vnto vs. For by it haue we bene washed from all the filths and pollusions which are in vs, that we might appeare pure and cleane in the sight of Godmyen, which more is, those mortall and deadly sinnes which are actually committed, shall not bee imputed vnto vs, because (as I haue said) that God hath buried our sinne, and will not regard it: but we must notwithstanding haue respect vnto it, and beware diligently howe we offende. But if any abuse and deceiue themselues, to be persuaded, they conceiue no wic-

hed desires, this shal occasion God to cal them to their account. And whye? for, when men flatter themselues, they must needs be condemned. And loe why the Diuell hath so much endeuoured to blinde the eyes of men, in making them beléeue that none of al these things are sinne: yea, we sée how the Papists think that the grossest faults that may be, are sone wiped out with one signe of the crosse, or with one Asperges of holy water. They thinke these things are nothing, and they sport themselues with God, as with some little childe. But let vs contrariwise remember, that when wee shall not onely slugge in sinne, but shalbee greatly inclined to flatter our selues in our vices: let vs (I say) remember to take vnto vs this glasse of the law, and to behold our selues in, that we abuse not, nor deceiue our selues. A mã may haue his face foule and dirtie, euery one shall mocke him, & yet he shal sée nothing thereon: but when he loketh in a glasse, & seeth all his face soyled, then hee withdraweth himselfe, and goeth and washeth it: so haue we néed here to do. It is true, that the whole law of God is as a glasse, to shewe vs our filthinesse, that wee might be confounded and ashamed of our wickednesse: but wee must haue to consider of our condition a most cleare and bright glasse. If I wer reade this onelie, Thou shalt not steale, Thou shalt not be a murderer, nor adulterer, euerie one will make him selfe beléeue, that he is guiltie in nothing: but when wee come to this commaundement, Thou shalt not couet, loe GOD sounded not onelie the depth of our heart, but all our thoughtes and imaginations: there is nothing which hee trieth not and examineth: and those thinges which wee shall account for no faultes, shalbee condemned before GOD, and he shall bee Iudge of them, if wee on our parte will not iudge them. Nowe, in the meane time wee are to magnifie the mercy of our God, that when we are so manie wayes culpable, he yet receiueth vs as iust and righteous. Let vs compare together the iustice wee obtaine by the meanes of faith, and the malediction which is on vs, wherein wee are plunged. Are wee culpable before GOD of one offence, of three, of any number? Nay rather, are wee not plunged into such bottomlesse gulfes, that when wee shall beginne to make our account, we shalbe ouerwhelmed and confounded with the multitude of our offences? An hundred millians of faultes are the hundred part of them which wee haue committed in the sight of

of GOD, wee are guiltie in so manie, that there is neither end nor measure in our sinnes. Yet for all this, GOD receiueth vs so to mercie, that we are accounted iust before him, as if there were in vs all integritie and perfection, and that wee wanted nothing of fulfilling the whole lawe. Therefore, when God bestoweth on vs this gift of faith, whereby wee apprehende and take holde of the grace and mercie, which hath bene purchased vs, by the death and passion of our Lorde Iesus Christ, that wee will nowe doe him this honour, to say: Lorde, it is in thy meere godnesse and frie mercie, that our saluation consisteth: when GOD (I say) pardoneth vs suche an infinit number of sinnes and offences, and clotheth vs with his own iustice: see we not howe farre wee are bounde vnto him for this inestimable godnesse? for then: when the lawe of God shall haue vtterlie confounded vs, seeing not onelie our concupiscences exceede all number, but that we are buried in them, as vnder great and huge mountaines, if GOD would seuerelie deale with vs for them, let vs knowe, that God will not leaue vs in despaire, but as soue as wee are beaten to the ground, he helpeth vs vp againe: when he seeth our weakenesse, hee reacheth vs out his hande, and calleth vs vnto him, and willeth vs to bee of good comfort: when he for his mercies sake will impute none of our sinnes vnto vs: hee in what sort the faithfull continue in glorifying of God, although they be in them selues condemned. And at this ende we must alwayes beginne to bee vtterlie confounded in our selues, that [illegible] vs from the deepest dongeon of death: seeing that our [illegible] lieth and consisteth in his meere mercie and grace. Nowe withall, let vs walke in all heedefulnesse: let vs [illegible] vnto our selues, knowing that when wee shall haue employed great paines to serue GOD, when wee shall haue shunned all occasions which might leade vs vnto euill, when wee shall haue fulfilled our lustes and affections, when wee shall haue further endeauured to represse wicked thoughtes, wee are yet to condemne our selues, and to stande in greate feare of the anger and displeasure of GOD. For, although, (through the vertue and power of his grace) sinne reigneth not in vs, yet doeth it alwayes dwell in vs, and staineth vs still with some blot of filthinesse and vncleannesse. Let vs therefore bewayle our selues hereof, and lament in suche sorte, that wee bee heereby incited and pricked forwarde to doe our duetie.

We see in what sort Saint Paule speaketh, after that hee had prosi-
ted so farre, and was come euen to an angelicall holinesse: O wret-
Rom.7.24. ched man that I am, who shall deliuer me from this bodie of death?
And why is it so, that he desireth death in him selfe? For no other rea-
son, but because he sawe sinne abiding in his bodie. Now, moreouer
wee must knowe, that wee ought not, although euerie day wee see a
million of faultes in vs, to bee discouraged. Loe, why Saint Paule
exhorting the faithfull to flee from vices saieth not, Let not sin dwel
Rom.6.12 in you: but he saith, Let not sin reigne in you. I grant it were to bee
desired, that sinne dwelt not at all in vs: but although we be not alto-
gether rid thereof, yet must wee not be too much dismaide. But when
he saieth that sinne dwelleth in vs, let vs know that this is first to
warne vs of our miserable condition: and againe, to admonishe vs,
that wee must bee exercised continuallie in combat and fight with
sinne, to the end wee should more feruentlie desire the aide and helpe
of our God, praying him to fortifie and strengthen vs by his power,
and by the grace of his holy spirite, which he hath giuen vs, in the
name of our Lorde Iesus Christ.

Now let vs cast our selues down before the face of our good God,
with acknowledgement of our faultes, praying him to make vs sicle
them better than wee haue done, and that wee may learne to con-
forme our liues to his obedience, who respecteth not onely the out-
warde woorkes, but regardeth what our willes, our affections, and
all our thoughtes are. And because wee can not in one day come to
such a perfection, pray we him that this may bee an occasion to hum-
ble vs, and to stir vs vp more manfullie to fight with sinne, that eue-
rie one awaken himselfe to correct the vices which are in his nature,
vntill God riding vs of this flesh and corruption, cloth vs with his
iustice, and reforme vs altogether to the image of his glorie.

That it will please him to graunt this grace, not
onely to vs, but to all people and
nations of the earth, &c.

The 13. Sermon.

Deut. Chap. 5.

22 These are the woordes, which the Lorde spake vnto all your multitude in the mount, out of the middest of the fire, the cloude, and the darkenesse, with a great voice, and added nothing thereto: and wrote them vppon twoo tables of stone, and deliuered them vnto me.

BEcause wee finde no better excuse for our lose behauiour, or for our rebellion against God, than to alledge ignorance, we could bee very well content to haue alwayes this cloke and couerture, to say, that we vnderstād not those things which God speaketh vnto vs, or that he directeth not his talke vnto vs, or that his voice is ouer harre for vs to heare it. But God perceiuing such a malicious wickednes in vs, hath sought to preuent al that which men might alledge for their defence: to the end they might no longer haue any excuse for themselues. And therfore when he published his lawe, see why he would that the doctrine therein contained, should bee pronounced with an high and cleare voice: and that it should bee spoken in the eares, not of three or foure onely, but in the hearing of all the people, both of the smallest and greatest: briefly, of all without exception. Againe he would that the lawe should bee written, that it might continue, and serue for the vse, not only of one age: but that euē to the end of the world it might haue his force and vigor, his rule & authoritie. Loe, why in this place it is saide, That God spake with an high and mighty voice. Wherby Moses giueth vs to vnderstande, that the lawe is no such secrete and hidden doctrine, that any one neede to alledge, that he is not so great a scholer as to vnderstande it. For God, not without great cause, hath so exalted his voice, when he would prescribe a rule for the ordering of the life of men. And he adiouneth this of purpose, that the Lord spake vnto all the multitude and assemblie, as if he should say: True it is that God hath chosen some among you to be your gouer-

nours, and hath giuen them of his spirite, yet will hée that his lawe be knowen of the most rudest and ignorantest, that it may be a common wisedome vnto them all: that is one of the points we haue hære to note. The second is, that God had added nothing after these ten sentences or sayings: Whereby Moses admonisheth the people, that such brewitie and shortnesse, as God vseth, ought to encourage them, to receiue what he shal speake. For hee propoleth to them no greate volumes, which might occasion vs to reply, that al our life would be to litle to studie them. God therfore hath not bene ouer long, when he deliuered his worde, he hath instructed vs in ten woordes, and no more: count wée them on our fingers, and wée shall haue instruction touching al that which is required for the well ordering of our life. Withal, Moses hereby would haue vs vnderstand, that seeing God hath giuen vs so certaine a rule, and that himselfe woulde adde nothing whatsoeuer, to that which he had saide, that we ought to holde our selues content therwith, and that it is not lawefull for the creatures, to adioyne any thing thereunto. And this is the seconde point we muſt note. For the third point he addeth again in this place, that whereof he had before spoken: namelie, that God when hee published his lawe, spake out of the middest of the cloude, that the mount smoked, that there were flames of fire, that the lightenings flewe abroade. And whervnto tendeth al this? Euen to this end, that the doctrine of God might haue the greater maiestie, and that men might bée induced to humble themselues in all reuerence before GOD, to subiect themselues fullie and wholie vnto his worde, and to yeelde all dutifull obedience vnto it. Loe then three notable pointes recited hére by Moses, before hée proceedeth to the rest which followeth. Nowe touching the first, let vs beare in minde, that which hath bene touched: namelie, that GOD hath spoken with an high and cleare voice, and that not to one handfull and small assemblie of men, but in generall vnto all the people, and that this is for no other end, but that wée might knowe, that the worde of God shall sounde lowde and shrill enough in our eares, for vs to heare and vnderstand it, except wée will wilfullie play the deafe men, and stop our eares at it. I graunt all our senses are so weake, that wée shall neuer bée able to comprehend one worde of that which God speaketh vnto vs, except he inlighten vs by his holy spirite. For the naturall man per-

1. Cor. 2. 14.

ceiueth

ceiueth not the thinges which are of God: they are to high and too
founde for vs. But wherof commeth this default and blindnesse, but
from our owne corruption and wickednesse? For it is most certeine
and true, that the veritie & trueth of God in it selfe, and in his owne
nature is easie enough, and plaine to bee vnderstood. Let vs not then
alledge, that it is to darke and obscure. But howe must we behaue
our selues to profite therby? If wee will that God make vs to profite
in his worde, let vs bee humble, and obedient, and little in our owne
eyes. For it is not for naught that he promiseth to teach and instruct
such as are humble. Let vs not then trust vnto our owne wit. Let vs
not come to the hearing of his worde with such an hautinesse and pre-
sumption in vs, as to thinke we are of sufficient capacitie to iudge of
that which shalbe saide: but rather let vs desire of God, that he will
open our eyes, that he will reach vs out his hand to leade vs; and let
vs confesse, that wee are not of such dexteritie of wit, to profit vnder
him in his schole, except he bestowe it on vs. When this humilitie
shalbe in vs, doubt wee not but the worde of God shalbe easie vnto
vs, and that wee shall knowe, and vnderstand, whatsoeuer is therin
deliuered vnto vs. Hereby wee see what miserie and wretchednesse
hath bene heretofore in the worlde, that the common people, and in a
maner all, haue forefollowed, and euen withdrawen them selues from
beeing taught by the holie scripture. For they thought this belonged
only to the Monkes and Priestes. And in the end suche a foolishe and
beastlie opinion was conceiued, that men thought all diuinitie ought
to be cloistered in their dennes and cabins. Now for all this, this for-
simonie hath alwayes remained, and must endure to the end of the
worlde, that God hath spoken with a lowde voice, that he hath not
hid, or drawen him selfe back into some little angle and corner of the
earth. So this hath bin a most wicked vnthankfulnesse in men, that
they haue left the worde of God as clene cast off & forsaken of all. And
so much the more heedefullie ought we to note this place, wherein it
is said, that God directed not his speech only to some great Doctours,
but hath communicated his voice to the whole people, euen to the
most simple & least among them. And withall let vs, to whome God
hath restored his worde, praise & magnifie him for so inestimable a be-
nefite, whereof the greatest part of the worlde haue depriued them-
selues by their owne malice and retchlesse negligence. Let vs, I
say, praise and extoll his goodnesse, that his worde at this day

soundeth in our eares, that wee may reade it, that all both priuatelie and publikelie may be partakers thereof, that this heauenlie treasure is laide open vnto vs to vse and to enioy it. Beholde an inestimable benefite, & aboue all, hee beholdeth on vs, for which wee ought to magnifie our God, as prizeing this benefite aboue all the rest. Moreouer, let vs bee attentiue to heare our GOD speake. Let none alledge here any excuse to exempt himselfe from this dutie. For seeing that GOD speaketh to the whole companie of the faithfull, to all them which are baptised in the name of our Lorde Iesus Christ, let euerie one in his degree and calling applie his studie to profite in the worde of GOD: and let vs all in generall take God for our Maister, and let vs be readie to heare him alwayes, and as often as it shall please him to speake vnto vs, as he ceaseth not dailie to doe. And thus much bee noted touching the first point: wherein it is saide, that GOD hath spoken to the whole multitude and assemblie. Nowe let vs come vnto the seconde point wee noted: namelie, that he added nothing. And this is saide, that wee might with better courage heare that which is conteined in the lawe. It is true, that all that which Moses hath written, appertaineth to the lawe, all that likewise which the Prophetes haue left in writing: finallie, whatsoeuer hath bene adioyned in the Scripture, all this (I say) conteineth one substaunce of doctrine, and the Bible is bigge enough: but yet, because wee should not needs to wander farre, or make any greate inquirie after that, whereunto wee ought to tende, GOD hath proposed vs one certeine scope and marke, at which in ordering our whole life wee might ayme, and shoote at. For all is referred to these ten sentences, as I haue saide. Let vs then but count ouer our fingers, and wee shal haue the tenne commaundementes of GOD, all is concluded in a short summe, whiche wee ought to beare in minde, to bee good scholers vnder GOD. Therefore, when God vttereth such diuersitie, are not men to be withheld and vntowarde, if they refuse such a doctrine, if they will not for all this bee at so much leasure, as to profite in the worde of GOD? Nowe therefore let vs laye aside all such vaine and friuolous replies, to say: O, the holie scripture is a deepe sea, it is a bottomlesse pit, if a man enter into it, which way shall hee bee able to get forth? Let vs alledge no such thinges. It is true, that God sheweth in the holie scripture, that which the Angels

1. Pet. 1. 12.

desire

desire to behold. It is true, that we can haue but some smal tast therof, while we dwel in the worlde. It is sufficient, that wee knowe in part, as Saint Paule speaketh, and in darkenesse, beholding as it were in a glasse, that which we can not see as yet face to face. All this is verie true: yet so is it notwithstanding, that God hath so conformed and abased himselfe vnto our rudenesse and slendernesse, that these thinges are easie vnto vs, or at the least wee shalbe able to vnderstand so much, as is profitable for our saluation. If with all there be things doubtful and obscure, let this sobriety be in vs, that we advaunce not our owne iudgements, but that we first aske counsell at the mouth of God, knowing that we are yet far from our perfection. And yet, according to the measure which he hath giuen vs, wee may alwaies glory in this, that our Lord Iesus Christ will not leaue vs in doubtfulnes and ignorante, but that he wil giue vs so sure and certeine a way, as wherin we shalbe able to walke with great assurance knowing that he hath not called vs in vaine vnto himselfe, when we shall not haue any vncerteine, and wandering course to runne, but so certaine a marke proposed, as whereunto if we shal direct our race we shall not nedde to feare any erring, as destitute of some good guiding and direction. Let vs therefore beare in minde, that our Lorde hath not spoken according to his own nature. For if he would speake in his owne language, should he be vnderstood of mortall creatures? Alas no. But how speaketh he vnto vs in the holy scripture? Verily he lispeth and stutteth for our better vnderstanding. Saint Paule saith, that he became as a nource of little children, when he preached the Gospell. Now when he spake it of himselfe, there is no doubt, but that he would shewe thereby the goodnesse of God, which so gouerned him by his holy spirit. And this which is in Saint Paule, we shall finde likewise in Moses, & in all the Prophets. Let vs then diligently note, that God is made as it were a nource, which will not speake vnto her infant, as she would vnto a man, but will haue respect vnto the capacitie of it. So God abaseth him selfe, forasmuch as we could not vnderstand what he saide, except he submitted himselfe to our vnderstanding. Loe for what cause he is like a nource in the holy scripture, that men might not perceiue his greate and infinite maiestie, to the whiche wee cannot come, nor approche any thing neere vnto it. Seeing GOD hath beene so gentle vnto

1. Cor. 13. 12.

1. Thes. 2. 7.

vs, as to open himselfe vnto vs in most familiar manner, so much more grevous a condemnation shall fall vpon our heades, if we bestowe not paine to profite in that doctrine which hee hath, as I may so say, shewed vnto vs, that there resteth nothing for vs to doe, but to swallowe it and digest it.

Let vs therefore note, that when Moses saith, That God added nothing to these tenne sentences, it is to this ende, that we should shewe our selues more easie to bee taught, and bee the more encouraged, knowing that God will not make vs to wander, and take endlesse labour, as in a thing which hath neither banke nor bottome: but hee propoleth vnto vs onelie ten sentences. True it is, that he hath expounded these ten Commandements by Moses. And againe, consequently by the Prophets. Lastlie, we haue had the finall declaration of them by our Lorde Iesus Christe, as it is at this day deliuered vs in the Gospell. But what? Wee haue yet this marke, whereunto we muste alwaies order our selues. Wee haue but ten wordes for our lesson, and seeing it is so, ought wee not to iudge our selues very frowarde and peruerse, if wee despise so great grace of God, and if wee come not vnto him, when hee handleth vs after so gentle a manner? This wee haue then briefly to beare in minde of this easinesse and plainenesse which Moses sheweth vs to bee in the worde of God. And withall let vs also note, that he would hereby warne vs, that we learne to content our selues with the simplicitie of the lawe, that wee advise our selues howe we come to controule GOD, to cloute our patches and peeces to his worde. For when hee spake, hee spake once for all, and will that men holde themselues to that hee hath said. As we shall see hereafter, how he hath streightly forbidden vs to bende either to the right hande, or to the left, or to adde any thing to his doctrine. And in verie deede seeing GOD hath adioyned nothing thereto, who are wee, to enterprise and take in hande any thing aboue him? Thinke wee, that when God deliuered his lawe, he had lost his memorie, and knew not what was profitable for vs? Can a man bethinke himselfe of that which hath been vnknowne vnto GOD? And againe, beside all this, when our Lorde hath so applied himselfe vnto vs, thinke wee hee would instruct vs by halfes, and leaue vs in the midwest of the way? Let vs therefore beare in minde, that seeing GOD having pronoun-

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ded these tenne sentences, added nothing vnto them: wee must so wholie applie and rest our selues simplie on that doctrine which is contained in his lawe, that wee ventur not to enterlace any thing of our owne whatsoeuer: but let vs knowe, that this is our perfect wisedome, to bee obedient vnto our GOD. If this had beene in all times well obserued, we should not haue bene at this day so incumbered, to amende the corruptions which reigne throughout the worlde. For, from whence commeth it, that men haue corrupted all religion, and the seruice of GOD, as wee see it is come to passe in Poperie? The Papistes will vaunt and boast themselues of seruing GOD, when they shall haue their solemnities, their ceremonies, and other like trash. And whence is this? Euen from this, that they haue presumed to adde some thing to the worde of GOD, when they thought it not sufficient, that GOD should be serued after his owne manner and fashion: but men must reare vp some newe deuises in their braines, and fansie whatsoeuer they shoulde thinke good. So then, all this which they call the seruice of God in Poperie, is nothing els but a fardel of trumperies, which men haue made vp together, and not onely this, but that which hath beene spoken by the Prophet, hath bene accomplished in them: namely, That they haue despised and set at naught the commaundementes of GOD, while they haue bene geuen to their owne inuentions. And men see the wickednesse and mischiefe which is happened by this diuelishe boldnesse and presumption, when men haue gone about to disguise the woorde of GOD by their lyes, and dreames, and dotages. So much the more diligentlie therefore ought wee to note this place, when it is saide, That GOD hauing once spoken, added nothing to that which he had said. And in very deede, as I haue already said, this is an horrible blasphemie, when men wil attempt to finde out, I knowe not what, some thing better than that which is contayned in the lawe of GOD. This were to reproue him of a lye, or to thinke that hee was not well aduised, or happilie that hee forgat to geue in commaundement that which he ought. And shal men finde out some thing better than hee? Nay verilie. Then let vs learne to order our selues in such sorte vnto God, that wee haue this alwayes imprinted in memorie, that God hauing spoken, he made a full ende and conclusiō, to say, These are my limits & borders, whosoeuer wil

Esay. 29. 13.

presume

presume to goe beyond, shall but venture further to breake his necke. And in deede it can not otherwise be, but a ruine and destruction shal followe vpon vs, when wee will not keepe vs in that high way, which God hath made, and hedged in for vs. Nowe, albeit GOD speake not at this time in so visible manner, as he did then to the people of Israel: yet ought wee often to call to minde this lesson, which is contained in the lawe. True it is, that God hath not spoken twice, but hee hath spoken once for all, as wee say: but wee on our part must againe and againe call it to minde, as it is also saide in the Psalme. The Lord hath spoken once, I haue heard him twice. *Psal. 62. 10.* For hereby wee are admonished, that it shall not suffice to haue vnderstoode for one day that which our Lord wil haue pronounced and published in his name: but wee must often and sundrie times meditate therevpon. Let euerie one therefore exercise himselfe heerein all the time of his life, and let vs not cease euening and morning, to call this to minde, and to consider wel that which our Lord sheweth vs. For when wee haue employed all the time of our life herein, we shal hardly come so farre as the midde way. True it is (as wee haue alreadie said) that euen at the first entrie God teacheth vs so much as is expedient to be knowen for our saluation. But yet for al this, we shall alwayes finde wherein to make our further profite in the word of GOD. Let vs therefore be diligent, and let vs not thinke it is labour lost, which we bestowe herein: no, not when we apply our studie day by day heerein, and shall not giue ouer to searche and inquire after that which God teacheth vs. Beholde in what sorte wee must apply this to our vse, and practise it: wherein it is said that our Lorde hath added nothing.

Now let vs come to the third point, which is, that God spake out of the middest of the fire of the cloude, and of the whirlewind. It is true that this hath beene before expounded alreadie: but seeing it is repeated againe vnto vs by Moses, let vs note that it is not any thing superfluous. And in very deede, wee cannot be too often put in minde hereof, that the worde of God ought to beare a greate maiestie with vs, to humble vs vnder it, that wee may yelde all subiection and obedience thereunto. And why? First we see what pride and arrogancie is in men, that they can hardly stoope and bend their neckes to be pliable in such sorte as they ought. I graunt, a man shall not heare them say plainely and in expresse woordes,

they

they will resist God, and make open war with him. But what ever they protest herein, are they so tractable to be taught, so humble and modest as were requisite they should be? Nay, they are farre wide from this. Againe, there is in vs such a dulnesse and vnsensiblenesse, that being so moulded, as we are, in these earthlie things, and so charmed in them, wee can not raise vp our vnderstanding to hearken vnto GOD, we can not come neere this spirituall wisedome, forasmuch as our mindes are so possessed with the cares of this worlde, wee neede not anie thing to make vs rest our mindes here belowe on the earth. It is therefore verie needfull and necessarie, that our Lorde touche vs to the quicke, to the ende we may beare suche a reuerence vnto his worde, as that it die not altogether in vs: partlie by our rebellion, partlie by our stupiditie and dulnesse, that is to say: because wee are so lumpish, so earthlie, so grosse and worldlie minded: and partlie, for that we are alreadie fraughted with so manie vanities, that wee neuer minde suche thinges as are on high, but lying still groueling on the grounde, wee are belde occupied in these transitorie and corruptible thinges. Therefore, GOD (not without cause) spake out of the middest of the fire, and of the cloude, and whirle winde, when he woulde publishe his lawe. For it behoued, that the people should be touched with some great feare, to say: There is no talke of sporting our selues with God, when he appeareth vnto vs so terrible, and in such maiestie: what resteth then, but that wee tremble vnder him, and shewe vnto him such subiection, that he gouerne vs as his sheepe, that we all bende our necke, that we stoope with our head suffering him to order vs to his will, that euerie one giue him selfe wholie thereto, and that we be all confounded, when hee speaketh, and haue no other affection and desire in vs, but to serue and honour him, and to subiect our selues altogether to his guiding and direction. Loe, why God hath so magnified his lawe, when it was first published. He might well haue spoken without casting out flames of fire, without making the mountaine to smoke, without hauing so darke and obscure a cloude: but hee would vse these miracles, that the people shoulde tremble, being stroken with an exceeding great feare. And therefore let vs note, that hee would hereby leade vs vnto that, which the Prophete Esaie speaketh, That his spirite shall not rest, but vpon them which tremble at his worde. For this is the thing wherein hee will prooue

Esa. 66. 5.

our obedience towardes him: namelie, that when he speaketh, we receiue without anie contradiction or gainsaying, whatsoeuer hee shall say, that we account it good for vs, and agree thereunto, and say, Amen: not onelie with the mouth, but also with the heart, that in our whole life we serue & obeie him. For this is the seruice which GOD requireth, and wherewith hee will be honoured: namelie, that we declare what obedience we beare vnto his worde. But because we are heerein so harde and so heauie, that rather wee drawe cleane backwarde, than bende the necke to carrie his yoke, it is needefull that wee be ayded and set forwarde by such meanes as are here mentioned. And therefore, let vs note, that this flame of fire appeared not then to serue and instruct them onelie, which sawe it: but that at this day the lawe of God must by this testimonie & witnesse be authorized, and made authentike: and that the remembrance hereof should remaine so fresh in our memorie, that when we shal cal to mind this which happened for one time, we be humbled vnder the maiestie of our God, and that when we would proudly and presumptuouslie lift vp our selues against him, this fire which then burned to feare the people, the thicke & darke cloude likewise come before our eyes, that we remember also, howe the mount was seene to smoke, & that all this may be to holde vs in such a fright and feare, that all loftinesse and hautinesse of ours be beaten down, that we may bethink vs to come and present our selues to our God, to bee led by him whither he will, and that we may followe, most willinglie, whither soeuer we shalbe called of him. Ye see then whereunto we must referre this which is here touched, of the smoke, of the flame of fire, & of the thicke cloude. And withall, let vs note, that when God appeared in a whirlewinde, and in an obscure and dark cloud, this was to represse and keepe downe the curiositie of men. It is true (as we haue alreadie touched) that GOD speaketh to be vnderstood, that he vseth no doubtfull and ambiguous wordes, that he fetcheth no long circumstances (as we say) but manifesteth and openeth his will so clerclie and plainlie, that the fault shalbe no where but in vs, if we be not perfectlie instructed therein, if wee will but lende our eares to heare him. But in the meane time, wee must not bring with vs such a foolishe curiositie, as to inquire, beyonde measure, of what wee list: as wee see men inclined to such a foolishe ambition, that their eares are alwayes itching, and they will say: I woulde

knowe

knowe this and that. Nowe, beholde howe our Lorde God opposeth him selfe contrarilie, and saieth: Will you knowe this and that? Loe, a thicke cloude which hindereth you: consider of this obscuritie and darkenesse which you see. So let vs learne, that if wee will bee good scholers vnder God, wee must not loose the bridle to our own fantasies, to be inquisitiue after that which ought to be hidden frō vs: but let vs content our selues with that, which shalbe spoken vnto vs in the name of God, and let vs waite for that day, wherin we shall haue a ful manifestation of the rest which is now incomprehensible: brieflie, let vs be ignorant of that which God will not declare vs. For this ignorance surmounteth all the knowledge and wisedome of the world: namely, when we desire to knowe no more, than our Lord permitted & graunted vnto vs. Now let vs come vnto that which Moses addeth: he saith, That the law was written in two tables of stone, & that it was delivered to him. When mention is made of two tables, we must call to minde that which hath beene said & handled heretofore: that is: that God could well haue written the whole law in one stone, but he woulde write it in two, that this distinctiō being made, we might so much the better comprehend that which is contained in the lawe. For we see, our Lorde hath so chewed those thinges for vs, which are there contained, that we might not alledge that he speaketh in to high a language for vs to vnderstande. For as much as there are two principal points in our life, our Lorde hath diuided his law into two tables: namelie, that we might know, how we ought to gouerne our selues towards him: & thē, how we are to liue & to be conuersant with our neighbours. Will a man order his life in all perfection? It behoueth first that he giue himselfe to the seruice of God, that he knowe what God requireth and approueth? and after this, wee must liue in such vprightnesse and equitie with our neighbours, that we shewe hereby, that we are the true children of God. First therfore we must know how God wilbe honoured and worshipped of vs. Secondly, we must render to our neighbours, that which appertaineth to them: obseruing this indifferency of nature, not to do to another, which we would not haue done to vs. So God hath declared in twoo tables, in what sorte hee will be serued of vs: as wee haue aboue declared, that hee proposeth him selfe onely to be worshipped, that men should forge no newe Gods. Againe, hee hath declared, that he wil not be represented by images nor moppets

that he is a spirit, and will be spiritually worshipped of vs, and not as men shall fansie, to reare vp this or that kinde of worshippe: but hee will be serued in spirit. Againe, hee will haue his name sanctified, hee will that men exercise themselues in his worde: and aboue all, that euery one withdrawe him selfe from his owne thoughtes and affections, that wee rest vs to bee ruled and gouerned onely by GOD. And this is contained in the first table of the lawe. Touching the second, we haue seene howe hee commaundeth vs to obay father and mother, howe hee forbiddeth vs murders, aduulteries, theftes, euill speakings, all wicked lustes and concupiscences. See ye then, why GOD hath diuided his lawe into two tables. Will wee therefore order our life well, and as wee ought? Let vs first learne to honour GOD, and after that, to liue with our neighbours in all integritie and vprightnesse. For there are some, which will abstaine from iniuring of others: but in the meane while, they haue litle regard of GOD: and they thinke they are quited and absolued, if so be none indite them, nor complaine of them in this worlde. But (I pray you) what shal this be, not to bee theeues, if wee commit sacrilege? Is it not a greater and more enormious crime, to robbe GOD of his honour, than to spoile a man of his goods, to cutte his purse, or to picke his cheste? So let vs not thinke wee haue fully discharged our duetie, when men shal sue no processe, nor make any complaint against vs: for God must also haue that hee requireth, and is due vnto him: for wee are bounde to doe him homage all our life time. Wee must therefore bestowe so much the more studie to obserue the first table of the lawe, that wee leade not a Philosophicall life, as did some of the Painims, to liue honestly and vprightly with men: but let vs haue in greatest price and estimation, the honour of GOD, and let vs beginne first of all at this point. Nowe againe, there are some which woulde seeme very deuoute towardes GOD, as hauing some great zeale to serue and honour him: but when they bee conuersant with men, they fall to pilling and spoyling, and beating of them, they are full of crueltie, of enuie, and malice. But let vs note, that GOD hath not separated the two Tables of the lawe: hee hath made a distinction of them: but hee hath not giuen to some the first table of the lawe, and to others the seconde table. He hath said: Behold my lawe, and that which I haue ioyned together, must not bee seuered, but must remaine vnseparable.

It is true, that you ought to bee warned to followe that charitie which you owe to your neighbours: but yet, when you haue discharged your duties in one point, you muſt conforme your ſelues vnto the other: and you muſt not retchleſly neglect to walke in all equitie and vprightneſſe, when you ſhal haue ſhewed ſome great deuotion of honouring and ſeruing of mee. There are alſo manie, which will ſerue God: but how? As their owne blinde deuotion ſhall teache them: as doe the Papiſts. But God meant to bridle vs herein, when hee gaue vnto vs the firſt table of his law, that we might learne to ſerue him as he commandeth, and that we accept of nothing as good, which hee approueth and liketh not. See then whereunto this appertaineth, which is ſaid, That God wrote his law in two tables of ſtone, to the end it might remaine and continue. For it hath not bene giuen to remaine for a certaine time, it is not tranſitorie. I graunt that the ceremonies haue an end, as this is a reaſon, why the lawe is called temporal, for as much as this order which had bene eſtabliſhed among the auncient people, to endure vntill the comming of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt, was then taken away and aboliſhed, ſ the thinges were perfect: ſo that wee are no longer vnder theſe figures and ſhadowes of the law, which ſerued for that time. But the truth ſ ſubſtance of the law was not to remain for one age, but it is a thing which endureth, and ſhall neuer ceaſſe or haue end. Let vs therefore learne, that God in ſuch ſort publiſhed his will, when the people came out of the lande of Egypt, that he ſpake in the mount of Sinai, that withal hee deliuered vnto vs there an order which we ſhoulde obſerue, ſ ſo prouided, that his doctrine ſhoulde alwayes haue his full force and vigor. And for this cauſe he hath written his law in two tables of ſtone. He hath not written it in barke, as at that time the maner was, or as we might now lay in paper, or in parchment: but he would that it ſhould be engrauen in ſtone, that there might be a memoriall thereof to endure, to the end we ſhould be confirmed in this which he hath ſpoken. For he was not contented to haue ſpoken for one time but hauing engrauen his lawe in ſtone, he would we ſhoulde haue attentiue eares to receiue it al the time of our life. Now withal let vs note, that it is true that it ſerued to no great purpoſe, that the law of God ſhould be ingrauen in ſtone, if this were all. What is then further required? We muſt know that the doctrine of God propoſed vnto vs, is indeed neceſſarie ſ profitable for vs, but yet that it ſhould ſerue vs to ſmall

purpose, except God should adde thereunto a second grace: namely, that this which hee hath pronounced, should be imprinted in our hearts and inwarde partes. Therefore, as God with his finger, that is by his diuine power, hath written his law in two stones, so must he now by his holie spirite write it in our heartes, which are of stone, & full of hardnesse: as the Prophete declareth, when hee saieth, That God shall giue vs heartes of flesh, which shall bee soft, pliable, and apt to be taught, and to receiue whatsoeuer hee shal command vs. So then, seeing God hath visibly declared, that it is hee which must write the lawe, to haue it wel knowne and vnderstoode, let vs make our request, that it will please him, by the vertue and power of his holy spirite, to write it at this day in vs, that wee may holde it within vs, and that howe soeuer the Diuell labour herein, he may neuer wipe it out of our remembrance. Nowe withall Moyses concludeth, that the lawe was deliuered vnto him, to conserue, and to kéepe it, and to bée also the minister and dispenser of it to the people, that hee might bée acknowledged of them for a Prophet, for otherwise hee coulde not haue executed his office, hee coulde not haue edified the Churche of GOD, except men had knowne that this charge was committed vnto him. As at this time, if wée were not persuaded that GOD would that his Gospel shoulde bée preached by the mouth of men, that there shoulde bée pastours in the Church to carie abrode his worde, which of vs would daine or vouchsafe to heare a minister? I am not, nor any creature beside, of such dignitie, as that I might persuade the worlde to receiue what I say. But when I speake here in the name of God, that men hearken to his doctrine, to rule and order themselues thereto, and to doe him homage: beholde, this is of more force than all the lawes, than all the statutes, than all the edictes of Kings and Emperours. Hath a mortall man done this? No. But when we know that God would that this policie and rule of order should be in his Churche and that men should inuiolably obserue it, that is: that there bee Pastours which may beare his worde abrode which may be expounders of it, which may be as his messengers to announce and declare the remission of sins in the name of our Lord Iesus Christ, which may reprehend, which may reproue, which may comfort and exhort, when (I say) we vnderstand that god would such a regiment should be in his church, then are we ashamed to resist and withstand him, which hath

Exe. 11. 19.

formed

formed and created vs. Loe why Moses in this place saieth, that God deliuered them the lawe. It is true, that God deliuered it to al the people in generall, as we haue said. Why then is Moses now the onelie possessor of it? It seemeth that God would depriue the whole worlde of it, and that Moses onely were priuileged therein, as if the lawe were written for him, and al other (as it were) excluded and shut out from it. But this is nothing so. And yet, albeit the lawe was giuen for the whole people, Moses is appointed the garder and protector of it. And this which God hath pronounced of him, we must extend further, as we see the Prophetes were appointed in the selfe same charge: namely, that they were as stewardes and dispensers of the treasure of saluation, of this couenaunt of God, and that this office was giuen vnto them, alwayes to declare the will of GOD, and to preach it vnto vs in his name. And this is the generall rule which Saint Paule hath deliuered, That men ought to esteeme vs as the ministers of God, and dispensers of the secretes which hee hath sent the worlde. Now, when Saint Paule saith, That we are disposers of the secretes of GOD, he sheweth hereby, that it is not enough that we haue the holie Scripture, that euerie one reade it in his house: but it is further required, that it be preached vnto vs, that we retein among vs this order, to be taught by the mouth of men, that there be pastours and teachers, whose ministerie God vseth, to the end that when we shall heare them, we may profit more and more in the doctrine of saluation. And this is the cause why Saint Paul in an other place saith, That the Church is the piller of truth, and as it were the safegard and towre thereof. The Papists alledge this verse foolishly, to yeeld vnto themselues a licentious libertie of making newe articles of faith, and of establishing lawes after their owne fansie: for Saint Paule hath vnderstood the cleane contrarie. He saith therefore, That the Church is the piller and sure prop of the truth of God: because that when GOD published his trueth vnto men by the lawe, by the Prophetes, and the Apostles, hee would that this ministerie should indure and bee perpetuall: that is, that there should bee some deputed and appointed to this office and charge, to expounde his worde, to edifie the Church in this sort. Let vs therefore knowe, that it is by meanes of the Church, that the trueth remaineth in his perfect and entire estate. For when GOD raiseth vp men, which are indued with his spirite, to con-

1. Cor. 4. 1

1. Tim. 3. 15.

firme

firme vs in the faith, to enlighten vs, and to shewe vs the right way. Loe how the trueth of God remaineth vnto the worlde, how it is not extinguished, howe it perisheth not. Let vs then note, that Moses meant not here to make himselfe the onelie possessour of the lawe, to exclude the people from it, and to shut them out of doores: but he speaketh as thus vnto them: Welbeloued, it is verie true, that the lawe is common vnto vs all, wee are all the children of God, I challenge nothing vnto my selfe aboue you: yet for all this, if I will discharge my dutie in the office wherein God hath appointed mée, I must be a faithfull expositor of the lawe to you, I must be the keeper of it, that you tread it not vnder foote, I must put you in mind of it euerie day, that you neuer forget it. Seeing then it is so, let all them which are here appointed ministers of the worde of God, take heede they be prest and readie to serue and minister vnto the ignorant: and let all consider, that it is not enough to read the holie Scriptures, but we must be diligent to profite therein, and to come with all humilitie to heare them, which are ordeined ministers of the worde, to deliuer vnto vs the meaning and vnderstanding thereof. Thus ye see whereto this text is to be referred.

Nowe let vs cast our selues downe before the maiestie of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done, and to lead vs to such a repentance, that we desire only to serue and please him, without seeking after any thing of our owne. And because we are so given to the things of this worlde, pray we him the sooner to draw vs hence, and in the meane while, to giue vs his grace to order our life to his will, and to conforme it to his iustice. And for the doing hereof, pray we him, that his word may beare such rule ouer vs, that we be gouerned by it, and conforme our whole life thereto, vntill that being despoiled of all our carnall affections, wee be clothed with his heauenlie glorie, when we shal haue neede, neither of scripture, nor of preaching. That it will please him to graunt this grace, not onelie to vs, but vnto all people and nations of the earth, &c.

The

The 14. Sermon.

Deut. Chap. 5.

23 And when ye heard the voyce out of the middest of the darkneſſe, becauſe the mountein did burne, ye came too mee all the chiefe of your tribes and your elders.

24 And ye ſaide, Beholde the Lorde our God hath ſhewed vs his glorie and his greatneſſe, and wee haue heard his voice out of the middeſt of the fire, we haue ſeene this day that God hath talked with man, and he remaineth liuing.

25 And now why ſhould we die? &c.

WE thinke if God in ſteade of preaching his worde by the meane and miniſterie of men, ſhould in his owne maieſtie ſpeake, or that ſome Angel ſent from him ſhould appeare vnto vs, that wee ſhoulde bee more liuely touched than wee are, and that the whole worlde incontinently would be conuerted, that euerie one would yeld obedience without any either contradiction or rebellion. But alas, we knowe not what is conuenient and profitable for vs. For if wee conſidered of our owne frailtie and weakeneſſe, wee would ſone vnderſtand that it is not poſſible for God, to touche vs with his maieſtie and power, but hee muſt needes altogether ouerwhelme and confounde vs. Therefore, when men deſire that God would manifeſtlie ſhew him ſelfe with ſome viſible ſigne, or that hee would deſcend from the heauens to teache them, they knowe not what ones them ſelues are, neither conſider they howe weake and fraile their condition is. For if they would well conſider and bethinke themſelues hereof, the infinite glorie of GOD would ſtrike them with a wonderfull feare and trembling, knowing ful wel, that they are not able to beare it. Therefore let vs knowe that GOD procureth our profite and ſaluation, when he declareth vnto vs his will by the mouth of men, when he ordeineth and appointeth miniſ-

sters of his worde, to bée messengers vnto vs of such thinges as hée knoweth to be méete and conuenient for vs. And yet so is it, that for once he would by euident proofe holde men conuicted, that it were not good and profitable for them to heare his voice thunder from heauen. And that is the cause why he woulde publish his lawe, not simplie by Moses, but descending in his owne person, as wee haue alreadie handled. And yesterday we saide, that the lightninges, the whirlewinde, and the flaming fire, and all that we reade of in the 19. and 20. of Exodus, that all this (I say) was done, to the ende the people of Israel should learne to beare greater reuerence vnto the worde of God.

Now this instruction apperteineth also vnto vs. For God would that the memorie of these thinges should last for euer, and that the vse of them should bée perpetuall. So then, beholde GOD hath once displaied and laid open his glorious maiestie, to the ende wée might learne to receiue his worde in all feare and humilitie. But withall he would also that the people of themselues shoulde bée constrained to say, It is not good that God speake vnto vs againe, onelie let vs haue a man to bring vs suche doctrine as it shall please him to sende vs. And this rule is for to condemne vs, if wée follow not the example of this people, which hastilie put forth themselues to speake in this sorte. Nowe if any one alledge, that this whiche was then spoken cannot binde vs, he is easilie thus answered: That if at this day God would doe the like he did then, that is, would pronounce with his own mouth that which we now heare by the mouth of mortall men, it should bée impossible for vs to abide his glorie: and not to be altogether ouerwhelmed therewith, and vtterlie confounded. And so let vs learne, that this is here recited vnto vs, to the ende that, in the person of the people of Israel, wee knowe that God applieth him selfe to our tendernesse and infirmitie, when it pleaseth him to sende vs his worde to bée preached by men like vnto our selues, which might bée his messengers, respecting heerein what is behouefull and profitable for vs. And knowe we, that this is an inordinate and foolish desire, to wishe that God would appeare vnto vs from heauen, or shew vs some apparant and visible miracle. For we cannot comprehend his maiestie and glorie. And although it bée the proper nature of the lawe to fraie vs, yet apperteineth this as well vnto the Gospell. For wee must take this as a generall rule,

that

that as sone as we feele the presence of God, wee must needes bee confounded. Wee see howe the Angels hide their eyes, because the glorie of God is greater than they can beare, and they are constrained to confesse, that they are ouerweake to beholde it as beeing creatures. What shall then be saide of vs? For wee are farre inferiour vnto the Angels. And there is beside in vs an other thing, which maketh our infirmitie the greater: namelie, that wee retaine not that integritie and innocencie of our first nature, wee are not such as God created vs, that is to say, earthly men only as was our father Adam: but we are altogether corrupted, and there is nothing in vs but sinne and wickednesse. And therefore it must needs bee, that God be made our enimie, and that we fly from his throne, as malefactors will keepe themselues as farre as they can from the iudgemẽt seate of their Iudge: briefly, wee are poore miserable wormes & stinking carions. So then, as sone as God shall approche and come neere vnto vs, wee must needes be frighted with so great a feare, as to be beaten therewith downe to the ground. Therfore it is profitable for vs, that God declare himselfe vnto vs in such sort as hath beene already touched: namelie, by the meane and ministerie of men: that hee ordaine and appoint men to expounde vs his will, as if he himself spake, and that his worde be receiued of vs in such reuerence, as if wee heard him to thunder from the heauens. But it shall bee profitable for vs more fullie to vnderstande that which in a worde we haue heere touched, and elsewhere more largelie handled: namelie, that the law in comparison of the Gospel frighteth and fraieth vs with a wonderful feare. And why is this? Because that in the lawe, God requyreth of men that which is his due.

Now consider wee, whether wee are able to discharge our selues herein. Nay contrariwise, whether wee bee not as poore and miserable debters, which haue not one farthing to pay. Ye see then in what a desperate case we are. For how euer the case standeth with vs, god dischargeth vs not, but declareth that we are worthie to bee accursed and condemned of him. And for this cause hauing shewed howe the life of men ought to be ordered, he addeth this curse and malediction as thundring on vs, Cursed are they which obserue & accomplish not all those thinges which are heere contained. As if hee saide. All men must passe heere vnder condemnation, from the greatest to the least, *Deut. 27. 28.*

all muſt knowe they are indebted vnto mée, and that by right I may caſt them downe to the bottomleſſe pitte of hel. If I pronounce this ſentence, there is not one may bee able to reply againſt mee, for all are vtterly loſt and condemned. Beholde the language and ſpeeche of the lawe, beholde the ſtyle which God vſeth, and nowe muſt not all néedes tremble hereat? It is not then without greate cauſe ſaide, That the law kylleth vs: and if withall it ſhould pleaſe God ſeuerely to require of vs that which wée owe him, wee muſt all néedes periſh and be confounded. Nowe in the Goſpel there is no ſuch thing: for there GOD beareth with vs, and not onelie pardoneth vs our faultes, but hee writeth alſo his will in our heartes. Moreouer, albeit wée ſerue him but by halfes, yet hee pardoneth vs our default, and (as I may ſay) winketh and cloſeth his eyes when wee are halting in our duetie. And as a father dealeth not ouer ſtreightlie and preciſelie with his childe to oppreſſe him, ſo God in his Goſpell vſeth a fatherlie gentleneſſe toward vs, that we ſhould not feare to come vnto him.

Heb. 12, 18. And this is the cauſe why the Apoſtle in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes ſaith, That we are not come to this mount which ſmoketh, that wée are not come to Sinai, to ſée the burning fire which might aſtonith vs, to ſée the lightenings, and all thoſe other thinges which were to amaze and confound the people: but that we heare a ſweete and pleaſant melodie, by the which we are accompanied of the angels of heauen, with the ſoules of the holy patriarches, and of the fathers, which lined in the hope of eternall life, (although they had yet nothing but obſcure ſhadowes) that God now coupleth & ioineth vs with them which in old time haue waited for the comming of our Lorde Ieſus Chriſt. Séeing it is ſo, we muſt not drawe backe, but euerie one muſt ſet himſelfe forwarde, to come with a bolde courage to heare our GOD, foraſmuch as hée ſpeaketh ſo gentlie and louinglie vnto vs, and vſeth ſo fatherly a ſpeeche, as which ſerueth not to feare and amaze his children, but ſweetelie to entiſe them, and to winne their heartes vnto him. This difference therefore is worthy to bée noted, that in compariſon of the lawe, the Goſpell may ſéeme ſweete and amiable vnto vs. But for all this, wée muſt returne to this generall principle: namelie, that it is much better that the worde of GOD bée preached vnto vs

by

by the mouth of men, then if God him selfe shoulde thunder from heauen. And why? For heare wee onely this naturall thunder, and beholde we are taken with a great astonishment, and yet here is nothing expressed. God only maketh a noise with a confused and vnperfect sounde. What should he then, when he should speake vnto vs, and when hee shoulde shewe vs his glory? Wee cannot looke on the sounde, which is a corruptible creature: and howe then shall wee bee able to beholde the maiestie of GOD, if it were fully shewed vs, and in his perfection? And therefore it is saide, that a mortall creature cannot see God and liue, cannot beholde his glory, and not bee vtterly confounded. I graunt that God appeared vnto Moses, and that not in such sorte only, as to other of the Prophetes, as it is saide in the booke of Numbers. That hee gaue him this special priuelege, to bee seene of him face to face, euen plainely as of his friende, that he appeared not vnto him, either by dreame, or by vision onlie, but after suche an especiall manner, that Moses seemed to be exempted from the companie of men, to be made more familiar vnto God. But what euer bee saide hereof, yet God manifested himselfe vnto him in portion and measure. For if he had shewed him his infinite being, Moses must haue needes (what grace soeuer he had receiued of the holie Spirite) been ouer whelmed therwith, and vtterly confounded. Yea, when at one time being yet among the liuing, GOD shewed him his glorie in more ample and plaine manner than euer hee had done: yet sawe hee him not, but as it were by the backe and hinder partes. In this similitude it is declared vnto vs, that as in beholding a man in the backe, wee haue not the plainest sight of him (for the plainest sight of a man, and the principall viewe is in the face:) so, albeit Moses had an especiall familiaritie with GOD, yet this notwithstanding, in this soueraigne and principall vision whiche was giuen him in the Mount then when hee was separated from the condition of this mortall and transitorie life, when he was as an Angell of heauen, yet hee sawe GOD but in parte: as when wee see a man by the backe. So let vs learne to content our selues when God vseth this order towardes vs: namelie, that his worde bee preached vnto vs by men: and let vs so receiue it at their mouth, as if wee sawe his maiestie face to face. For it is profitable for vs to haue pastours,

Num. 12. 7. 8.

Exo. 33. 23.

which hée appointed for ministers of the worde, forasmuche as wee could but perish and be brought to nothing by the appearance of the glorie of God, if it should bée manifested vnto vs. And to the ende that none might take any occasion to complaine, as if the worde of GOD were not sufficiently approued, and that men might not doubt whether they ought to holde them selues vnto it or no, in publishing his lawe hée shewed himselfe. And wée haue heere the testimonie of the people, which say: It is the Lorde, hee hath made vs this day to féele his glory and greatnesse, wée haue seene that it is hée which speaketh, hee hath interposed none to bée his spokesman vnto vs: but wee haue heard his voyce with our eares. This then hath béene done for once. Withall let vs take this which is heere recited for a testimonie and witnesse, that Moses spake not of himselfe, that hée hath not forged and deuised of his owne braine, the doctrine wée holde of him: but that he hath béen a faithfull steward of GOD, who aduowed and approued him, and not onely ratified and confirmed by miracles this whiche Moses taught, but in his owne person declared, that it was hée who was the author of all this doctrine.

Nowe, forasmuch as by great reason the Gospell should bee as autentik, & alwel authorized as the law, we haue had also a witnes from heauen, that this is no humane doctrine, but that it procédeth from God. And this is that which S. Peter toucheth in his second Canonicall Epistle, saying: That he and his companions heard the voice from heauen, by the which the father declared his sonne to bée the souereigne maister and doctour of his whole Church? Behold my welbeloued sonne, heare him. Therefore, when this voice thundred from heauen, God declared that we ought not to take the Gospel for a doctrine bred and borne héere beneath: but that we should alwaies haue this maiestie before our eies. 2. Pet. 1. 18.

As at this time, if wee will be true disciples of GOD, when wee come vnto the Sermon, wee must call to minde this whiche Moses reciteth, That the lawe was published in suche sorte, that it was God him selfe which spake and pronounced it. And againe, wee must adioyne in the second place, the witnesse wee haue alleadged that this sentence of God resound and ring again in our eares, when he hath pronounced; That our Lord Iesus Christ is he, whom he wil

haue

haue men to heare. Loe an authentike and sure zeale wée haue, that the worde of God, albeit it bee brought vnto vs by mortall men, shoulde bee of full and perfect authoritie with vs, as it deserueth. And to the end that men should not thinke, that Jesus Christ onely ought to bée hearde in his owne person, he saieth: He that heareth you, heareth me: and he which refuseth or despiseth you, hée refuseth both me, and him which hath sent mée. Indeede the Pope and his sacrilegious adherentes, vsurpe this sentence for to establishe their tyrannie: but it apperteineth asmuch to them, as to the deuill of hell. And why? For they should first of all bring vs the pure doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ: séeing the sonne of GOD hath not so resigned his office vnto men, as to despoile him selfe thereof: hée will not haue vs gouerned after the appetite and lust of men, but hée will alwayes haue that preeminence ouer vs, and that rule and empire, which hath bene committed into his handes. So then, when it is saide, That in hearing of them whom he hath sent, wée heare him, it is meant, that if wée obey the doctrine of his Gospell, not despising it when it is published vnto vs by men, it is asmuch as if he spake vnto vs: admonishing vs hereby, that wée stay not our selues on the outwarde appearaunce we beholde with our eyes. And this is that which Saint Paule saith, That albeit wée bée brittle vessels: yea, broken pottes of no value, yet this inestimable treasure, which is committed vnto vs, is not therefore of lesse price and estimation, neither ought the dignitie & worthinesse of it for this cause bée diminished. True it is, that we are not able to procure vnto the worde of God such a reuerence as gladlie wée would and desire. And why? For there is in vs nothing, nothing I say of our owne, whiche may make for the aduancing of the glorie of GOD: and yet for al this, wée must make proofe of our obedience in this behalfe, that is, that wée beare abroade the worde of GOD, with suche great confidence and boldnesse, as knowing that hee hath made vs his Embassaddurs, to declare his will: and withall let vs beware wée correct all hautinesse and presumption herein. As for those vnto whom wée come, let them receiue in all simplicitie the doctrine of the Gospell, and let them not dispute, why and wherefore they are bounde to subiect them selues vnto mortall men. For séeing that men shoulde despise, and set at naught the sonne of GOD:

Luc. 10. 16.

1. Cor. 4. 7.

yea,

yea: the heauenlie father which hath ordeined him soueraigne doc-
tor, except they yeare him whom he hath sent for his messengers, it
behoueth vs with all diligence to bee ruled and ordered herevnto.
So then let vs learne to stoope our necke, to beare the yoke of the
seruice of GOD, receiuing the doctrine of the Gospell in all humi-
litie, although it bee preached vnto vs by men. And as I haue al-
readie saide, let vs diligentlie consider the ratification it hath, which
ought to suffice vs to knowe, that the Gospell hath beene brought
from GOD himselfe, seeing it hath bene warranted and ratified
from heauen, when GOD with his owne mouth pronounced, that
he would that men should heare his sonne. We see in effect what wee
haue to beare in minde vppon this place. And therefore let vs fol-
lowe them of whom mention is here made: namelie, that we desire
not, that GOD for our pleasure descend from heauen: but when
it shall please him otherwise to communicate his word vnto vs, let
vs be therewith sufficientlie contented. Now it might seeme at the
first sight, that there were in this place some contrarietie. For the
people say: Wee haue seene this day how God speaketh vnto men,
and yet they liue. And afterward: Wee shall die if God speake vnto
vs. For it seemeth, that if wee haue once had experience, that God
confoundeth vs not when he speaketh, that this ought to make vs
more bolde and hardie. And why? For seeing wee are remaining
aliue, albeit wee haue heard the voice of God: when hee hath done
this for once, why shall he not doe it twice or thrice? And here the
people say, Wee haue heard the voice of God, but if he speake a-
gaine vnto vs, beholde we die, wee are vndone, we perishe. It
seemeth that they trusted not to the bountie and goodnesse of GOD,
and that they were also verie vnthankefull, for not acknowledging
and remembring the benefits, which GOD bestowed on them,
when he left vnto them their full vigor and strength. But we must
note that the people hereby declareth, that they will not tempte
GOD any further, that it sufficeth them once to haue knowen
that the lawe was not a thing forged and feigned by men; but
that GOD was the onely authour thereof. This sentence there-
fore ought thus to bee taken, as if they had saide: Wee haue this
day seene that GOD speaketh vnto men, and they yet continue
aliue: this is sufficient for vs, wee must take heede, wee abuse not
the patience of God. He hath spared vs this day, but wee must not

herevpon

herevpon conclude, that he wil alwayes doe so: he hath tryed vs in this sorte for one time, euen because of our malice, our stubbornnes, and hardnesse of heart. For were we worthie vnto whome he should in this wise appeare in his glory? But hee knewe that wee would not bee sufficientlie daunted and tamed to bee ordered to his obedience, except hee should come vnto vs in his visible glorie, and should amaze vs with such feare as to confounde vs. So then, if he should not haue wonne vs by such force, hee knewe wel wee would haue still continued as wilde and sauage beastes. But seeing it hath pleased him of his goodnesse to pardon vs the fault and offence wee haue committed, and that at this day hee beareth mercifullie with vs, let vs not returne to tempt his patience any more. For this should bee too great an outrage, this should bee to mocke his gentlenesse, and to make a scorne of his patience. So then this testimonie sufficeth vs, both for our life, and for the life of our children: & for euer vnto all posterities, euen to the end of the world. Wherefore let them which shall come after vs knowe, that they must not enter into this fonde and foolishe desire, to wishe to drawe God vnto them out of the heauens, as if it were conuenient he should bee our fellowe mate and companion. Yee see then how these two places agree very well together. Now here wee haue to note, that albeit the worde of God bee of that force and power, as to destroy and bring vs to nothing, that he yet vseth such mercy towardes vs, that it is vnto vs to life, in steede of consuming and destroying vs. And when I say that the worde of God is of such force as to consume vs to nothing, I vnderstande not only the woorde as it is heere described by Moses, but if the Lord would make vs feele the vertue and power of his worde, albeit it should be preached vnto vs by men, yet should it serue vtterly to confound vs. But now wee see that the Lorde quickeneth vs, when hee speaketh vnto vs, and especially at this day, when the Gospell is preached vnto vs: for this which is spoken by Saint John, is euerie day accomplished: namelie, That all those which heare the woorde of the sonne of man, are restored to life. For by nature wee are aliantes from GOD, we are exiled and banished his kingdome, wee are dead, and as it were entumbed in some graue or sepulchre: and loe, our Lorde Jesus Christ proffereth vnto vs the remission and forgiuenesse of our sinnes: God his father adopteth vs for his children. Beholde then the

Iohn. 5. 25.

manifestation of saluation which is opened vnto vs, and we are thereby quickened and restored vnto life by the meanes of the Gospell. And for this wee haue wonderfull greate cause to praise and glorifie our GOD, for that hee maketh his worde to serue for to restore vs vnto life, and to deliuer vs from death, whereas his worde is of such force and vertue, as vtterly to consume vs, if he of his mercie did not turne it to worke a cleane contrarie effect in vs.

Howe withall let vs diligentlie note, that if our Lorde hath once bestowed on vs more than we any way deserue, wee must not therfore take leaue and licence héereby to tempt him, and to desire alwayes to rule him after our owne lustes and appetites. As we sée at this day the Papists will excuse themselues for not receiuing the Gospell, because they sée no miracles done in our time. Yea, but let them answere me whereunto the miracles which our Lorde Iesus Christ hath done, and which he committed to his Apostles, serued? Ought these to serue nothing to our profite and commoditie? Behold then what admirable vertue and power GOD hath declared at the beginning of the gospel. The heauen and the earth were then moued, there was no parte in the worlde wherein GOD imprinted not some worke or signe of his maiestie, that the gospell might bee authorized. Beholde the Angels, which descended at the birth of our Lorde Iesus Christ, to béare witnesse vnto him: beholde the Sunne which was darkened at his death: behold the vaile of the temple which was rent in two pieces, to shew that the holy Sanctuarie was opened, and that freer and bolder accesse was graunted vnto GOD than euer before. The raging and tempestuous Sea is appeased, the Diuels themselues doe homage to the glorie of GOD being present.

Briefly, both by signes and wonders aboue and beneath, god hath declared that the gospell proceeded from him, as wee haue alreadie shewed. So many maladies & sicknesses healed, so great warres appeased, so many other signes and wonders which were shewed, were not to serue for one time onely, but at this day the memorie of them ought to remaine: and wee must receiue this witnesse for a seale of our faith, that wee doubt not, but that the dignitie of the gospell ought to bée as greate at this day, and that the authoritie therof

thereof is alwaies nowe ratified and confirmed, as it was then, when Christ wrought his miracles. And yet for all this wee see many of the vncredulous and vnbelieuing sort, which alledge, that if they did see any miracles, they should be conuerted.

But it is certaine, if they were nowe presently shewed, they would still remaine in their obstinacie and stubbornesse, and take thereby an occasion of further enuenoming and impoysoning themselues against God. What remaineth then for vs to doe? We must learne (as I haue saide) to content our selues with that which God hath once done. If God hath giuen vs more than hee owed vs, let vs receiue it, and with giuing of thanks let vs learne not to prouoke his wrath and anger against vs by an ouer presumptuous tempting of his patience. Behold then what we haue to beare in minde in this place, when the people saith, Let the Lorde speake vnto vs no more, for it sufficeth vs that we haue heard his voice, and yet haue beene permitted of him to liue.

And that this wee haue aboue declared may bee more certeinlie confirmed vnto vs, let vs beare in minde that which in deere saide, What flesh hath heard the voice of the liuing GOD and liueth? For by these wordes in this place it is plainelie shewed, ỹ the people of Israell spake not in their owne name, but euen in the behalfe of all mankinde. They say not onelie, What are all wee to heare GOD speake? but What is all flesh? And in verie deede (as I haue touched in the beginning) it cannot bee, but men are either staring madde, or starke drunken, when they cannot humble themselues: for there needed no other thing for them to doe, but to respect their owne estate and condition, to say, What are wee? There is nothing, neither in our bodies, nor in our soules, but frailtie. Wee are not nowe remaining in our nature wherein wee were first created: but beeing fallen there from into that estate wee nowe are in, what are wee but as a water which glideth away, as a smoke which passeth and vanisheth on a sodeine? And which worse is, wee are enimies of GOD, and hee must needes bee our aduersarie partie, forasmuch as there is nothing in vs to be founde, but sinne and wickednesse.

Therefore when wee bee entised and tickled with suche foolishe and vaine lustes and desires, as to wishe that GOD would doe

miracles, that wee might heare the Angels of heauen: let vs returne to thinke on this which is heere saide, and what is all flesh? Let vs, I say, enter into this consideration, to bethinke our selues what wee are, and our owne small abilitie shall sufficiently aduise and aduertise vs, to giue praise and thankes vnto God, that he maketh vs not feele his presence to consume and vtterly to confound vs, but with an amiable mildnesse and gentlenesse, allureth vs to himselfe, when we heare men like our selues, and our brethren, which speake vnto vs in his person.

And let vs further note, that whē the people of Israell say, What people hath heard the voice of the liuing God, and remained aliue as wee? It is to shewe vnto vs, that God would not that this should bee drawne into consequence, for vs to conclude any thing thereon. And therefore let vs no alledge this, to say: And why speaketh not God at this day vnto vs after a visible manner, as hee hath done to his people in the mount? It pleased him then so to doe, but we must not impose him a lawe, or thinke to binde him to continue to do that which he hath done for one time onelie. So as I haue saide, let vs not abuse the graces of God, as dispitefully to question against him in this sorte, And seeing God hath done this at other times, why will he not doe the like at this day? When men lift themselues vp in this manner against God, behold, what a diuelish presumption and ouerweening is in them. Let vs therefore giue God so far as to graunt him this libertie, to manifest & declare himselfe vnto vs in such sorte as it shall please him, & as he shall know it expedient & necessarie for vs. Let vs not binde him by constraint to any necessities, for that it shall haue pleased him for one time to vse some especiall grace, let vs not desire him to do the same againe, but content we our selues simplie with his will, whereunto we must alwaies be subiect. In the end, it is said, Go thou neere vnto God, & heare all which he shall say vnto thee, & declare thou it vnto vs, & we will heare it, & doe it. We see here in the first place how the people desire that Moses should be ỹ messenger, to bring thē what soeuer he shal haue receiued frō God. And this is written for our instruction, that euerie one submit himselfe to the pollicie & rule of order which God hath established in his Church. For (as I haue already said) he will speake vnto vs by the mouth of men, that is ỹ onelie purpose why he would there should be

mini-

ministers. This order is not inuented by men, but our Lord Jesus Christ hath declared, that hée would haue suche a regiment in his church. Ye sée then an inuiolable order, and which proceedeth from God, who will haue Pastours in his Church to announce and declare his doctrine which wee must receiue to our saluation. Seeing it is so, let none oppose himselfe against it, but let vs patiently beare it, that God raise vp them amongst vs, by whom he will be serued to bring vnto vs the embassage of saluation. And let vs not murmure at this, that euerie one of vs hath not such a priuiledge: for hée will that his bodie, that is, his Church, bée so gouerned. Ye sée then what wée haue to gather vppon this place: namelie, that sithence GOD hath appointed ministers of his worde, wée heare them quietlie and contentiuelie, that there bée no enuying or maliring for this, if all be not Doctors and teachers, and that GOD appoint not euerie one vnto this office. For wée must bée ordered according to his good pleasure, as we haue alreadie saide.

Behold one note to bée obserued. But withal, let vs also note, vnder what condition we must haue and receiue Pastors. For this place is to discerne betwéene seductors and deceiuers, which falslie abuse the name of GOD, and attribute vnto them selues the title of Prelates without rime or reason, & betwéene the true Prophets and good seruitours of God, and ministers of the Gospell. The Pope and all his pestilent vermine will say, that men must heare them, and receiue their doctrine, without any contradiction. And why? For God would there should bée Prelates in the Church, and will that men heare and obey them. All this is true. But in the meane while, is this title giuen indifferentlie vnto al, and without discretion? No. But God hath withal adioined that he will be chiefe, that we be subiect vnto him, and not in the seruitude of men. Seeing then it is so, wée must know what Prelates and what Doctors God sendeth vs, as we are directed by this place: namelie, such as heare what God shall say vnto them, and then deliuer it faithfullie to the people. So they which would be heard in the name of GOD, and that men receiue their doctrine in all reuerence, let them bée the first to heare God, let them not attempt to adde any thing vnto the word of God: but let them be tractable, and easie to be taught of God: and when they shal haue bene instructed by God, let them dispense vnto others that which they haue receiued from God. For none are to be accounted

sed good ministers of the worde of God, but suche as haue first biene his scholers, and which vsurpe not a maist ershippe ouer others, to bring vnto them whatsoeuer shall seeme good to themselues? And wee must not heere be too wise: for God reserueth vnto him selfe this office, to declare that vnto vs, which he will haue vs to knowe. It is not here simplie saide, Heare that which God shall say vnto thee, and then come and tell it vs: but it is saide, All that which God shal say to thee: so that there is no point nor article which may be omitted, in slich sort, that Moses is here put beside all libertie of presuming to declare any thing, but that which God appointeth, and commandeth him to declare. And now, what are these filthes of the world, which will dare aduaunce themselues aboue Moses? Wee shall in the ende see, that there neuer was any Prophet raised with so singular a grace as was Moses. And in verie deede, albeit wee see an admirable spirite in Esaie, and in all the rest of the Prophetes: yet is Moses notwithstanding preferred before them all, when it is saide: Remember the lawe of Moses my seruant, which was giuen him in Horeb. And beholde Malachie, which speaketh after all the rest of the Prophetes, and referreth all vnto Moses, as if hee were the principall Doctor and Teacher, as if the lawe were the fountaine wherehence all must drawe.

Now sithence it is so, that Moses, who hath in this sort bene preferred, to whom God gaue so excellent a dignitie: if he (all this notwithstanding) must not enterprise to declare any thing of his owne, but what he hath heard of God, that must he faithfullie dispense vnto the people: is it not now a deuilish arrogancie of lewde villaines to presume to say, that it is in them to impose and make lawes for the consciences of men, and to binde them vnder the paine of mortal and deadlie sinne? Is not this too barbarous a tyrannie? So then, let vs hold this mean, that we fal not into two vicious & wicked extremes: namelie, that seeing God would gouerne his church by the exteriour preaching of his worde, let euerie one rule and order himselfe thereto, let vs be diligent to heare sermons, and let this policie and rule of order be inuiolablie kept as a thing sacred and hallowed: namelie, to be taught by the mouth of mortal men. And in the mean time notwithstãding, let not men haue this authoritie, to bring vnto vs what them listeth, but let them be faithfull stewards and dispensers of the worde of God. And that we may alwayes protest, that our faith is

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grounded on the will of God, let vs not depende on the wisedome of men, but let our Lord so hold vs vnder his obedience, that wee may say, It is he whome we heare from heauen, albeit he vse the ministerie and labour of men, as a meane to doe this.

Now let vs cast our selues downe before the maiestie of our god God, with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him that he wil make vs to feele them more & more, in such sort, that we may learne to displease our selues. And because the souereigne & best remedie to deliuer vs from all our maladies and corruptions is this, that wee heare his holy doctrine, pray wee that it will please him to opt vs our eares, that we may learne to receiue it in all feare and humilitie, and that it may be so imprinted in our heartes, that we make it auails to the vse wherunto he hath ordained it, that is, that we be thereby quickened and brought to saluation, to the ende wee may with al our heart desire it, and apply our studie thereto more and more. And so let vs say humblie from our heart, Almightie God and heauenlie Father, &c.

The

The 15. Sermon.

Deut. Chap. 5.

28 Then the Lorde hearde the voyce of your woordes, when yee spake vnto me: And the Lorde said vnto mee, I haue hearde the voyce of the woordes of this people which they haue spoken vnto thee, they haue well saide all that they haue spoken.

29 Oh that there were such an hearte in them to feare mee, and to keepe all my commaundementes alway, that it might goe well with them, and with their children for euer!

30 Goe say vnto them, Returne you into your tentes.

31 But stand thou here with mee, and I will tell thee all the commaundementes, and the ordinances, and the lawes which thou shalt teach them, that they may doe them in the lande, which I giue them to possesse it.

32 Take heede therefore, that ye do as the Lorde your God commaundeth you, you shall not decline neither to the right hand, nor to the left.

33 But you shall walke in all the wayes which the Lorde your God hath commaunded you, that ye may liue, and that it may goe well with you, and that your dayes may bee prolonged in the earth which you shall possesse.

FOllowing on that which was yesterday declared, God in this place sheweth, that hee agreeth vnto the request and desire of the people, and giueth them choice of that, which shall serue best to their profite and commoditie. And herein we see, that he would breede a sense and feeling of his gwonesse in this people, to the ende that hee might the

the better winne them vnto himselfe. It is true, that for the right of his rule and authoritie he hath ouer vs, we ought to be vnder his subiection, and to yelde him obedience, and he might force vs heereunto: but hée chaseth rather to handle vs in all fatherlie loue and gentlenesse. Loe then why hée sheweth, that hee is agreed with the request of the people. And so let vs diligently note, that GOD considereth of that, which is so good and profitable for vs, that if we were to make our choice, we could not wishe any thing better, than that which he hath appointed. It shall not alwayes séeme so vnto vs, but the thing notwithstanding euidently declareth it. Moreouer, hée addeth that hée hath not done according to the desire of the people, but because he did approue and allowe their request. For wel it may be that God sometimes will giue vnto men that which they require: but this is because of their importunitie, and in the meane time it turnes them to their condēnation. As when the people would néedes eate flesh, it is very true, they were satisfied therewith, but they payed their shot full deare: for God was angrie, that they desired to enioy a thing, which was taken from them. And albeit God then satisfied them which had murmured, so that they had wherwith to fill their bellie, yet had it bin much better they had al died for hunger. Now in this request wherof Moses in this place speaketh, there is no such thing: for God expressly saieth, That they haue rightly iudged. As if he did say: Follow this order, for ye shal sée what a pleasure & good turne I do you. Ye haue requested of me a man which should speake vnto you in my name, & I am contented you haue him. This therfore ought ỹ rather to perswade you to receiue the doctrine, which shalbe preached vnto you in my name: forasmuch as I haue graunted this at your own choice & desire. And yet think you not that I would haue pleased you herein, without great reason, and for good purpose. For I assure you, you shal do well to follow this order of profiting in my worde. And alwayes, & as often as Moses shal come to you, when I shal haue sent him, heare ye with al reuerence that which hee shall tell you for your profite & cōmodity. And so let vs note, that whē the word of god shalbe preached vnto vs by mē, that this is not done according to their pleasure & fantasie, but because that God hath heere deliuered a doctrine, which is profitable for vs. And this ought the rather to stay vs from being moued with any foolish affectiō & [illegible] to change, as séemeth vs, what we vnaduisedly shall mislike.

Num. 11. 33.

waies nouelties delite & please vs. Know we then wherein we are to stay & rest our selues: namely, that all the time of our life we heare the word of God, which shalbe preached vnto vs by men. And why? Because not only the will of God is such, but hee hath also declared that the thing is good & behoueful for vs. Moreouer, God in this place awaketh the people, better to consider of obseruing the commandements of the lawe than they had done. For the people had said, We will do them. And God saith on his side, that he will giue them the will to do them, that he will breede in their heart such a desire. Now by these words he giueth vs to vnderstand, that it was a smal thing for them, and it cost them little to make a promise, as men will with ful mouth make great protestations, but when the time commeth to fulfil the things they haue spoken, they shewe full well how at random and vnaduisedly their promises haue beene made. God therefore to make the people féele howe harde a matter it was to obserue the lawe, saieth in this place, I would feigne it might bée so. For the worde he vseth, when hée saieth, hée will giue them the will and power, importeth in Hebrewe, this, which we say. And so be it: and, I coulde wishe it well. It is true, that GOD héere speaketh much after the manner of men, vsing a verie humaine speeche. For hée needeth not to wishe anie things all things are in his hande. And therefore one might replie vnto him: And this is in thee, O Lorde, to doe: askest thou who will giue them an heart and will? Who hath power to doe this? For man of himselfe wil neuer be inclined vnto that which is good: but he must be from elsewhere drawen thereunto, and this can not be by anie creature, but by the holie spirite. So then séeke no further who shall giue them the power to obserue thy commaundements, but shew thou forth in them the vertue and power of thy spirite, and then they shall keepe them: as wee shall hereafter sée that God saieth, I will giue you the will and power to feare me. If this were in vs, what should hée néede to say thus? But he pronounceth that it is in him to doe this. As he addeth by his Prophete, I will giue them an heart to obay mée. Wée shall sée as much saide to this purpose hereafter, I will cause that they shall keepe my commaundements. God therefore challengeth this office vnto him selfe of instructing men, and of gouerning them by his holie spirite, to the ende they may be subiect vnto him, and that they yeeld themselues to his iustice. And wherefore then in this place

Deu. 30. 6.

Ier. 32. 39.
Ezec. 11. 19
& 36. 27.

séeketh

ſeemeth hée to wiſhe this? It is for that (as in manie other places) hée ſpeaketh after the manner and faſhion of men. And this is to the end, that wée may better vnderſtande, as I haue alreadie touched, that when men ſpeake vnto vs of walking in the obedience of God, that this is not done without great difficultie, and that all our ſenſes may bée more throughly awakened, to applie our ſelues willingly and painefully vnto ſuche a ſtudie. Therefore in ſteade of this, that men lightly promiſe without anie long deliberation, that they will worke, I knowe not what miracles, that they will obey GOD, that they will obſerue the lawe, let vs knowe, that wée muſt examine what power and ſtrength is in vs, and then ſhall we perceiue howe weake wée are, wée ſhall ſée that we are ſo farre from being able to performe all that which is commaunded vs, that wée knowe not where to beginne: nay, we knowe not howe to conceiue one good thought, vntill GOD hath reformed vs, and drawen vs vnto him ſelfe, that hée giueth vs the will, and beſtoweth withall on vs the power to put in execution and practiſe that which we ſhall haue willed. Ye ſée then what this worde importeth, And who ſhall giue them the will? Marie, I woulde it might bée ſo. By this let vs bée admoniſhed, not to preſume on our owne power and ſtrength, to bée ouer hardie and venturous in matters concerning God.

For this is the cauſe of our ruine and deſtruction, when we think our ſelues able to doe all thinges whatſoeuer: and GOD by good right laugheth to ſcorne in the meane time ſuche arrogancie and ouerweening of men. But learne wée to féele our owne weakeneſſe, howe we are able to doe nothing. And albeit that we are bounde to accompliſhe whatſoeuer God commaundeth vs, that this is not to ſay, that wee therefore haue the meane to doe it: yea rather, wée want all power and abilitie to performe it. For it is not ſo ſmall and eaſie a matter to loue God with all our heartes, to loue GOD with all our mindes, with all our power, and ſtrength, and might, that we néede but to ſay: Yea, wée will goe roundlie away herein: but let vs knowe that this ſurmounteth and exceedeth all the abilitie which is in men.

Nowe, when wee knowe that the lawe conteineth a iuſtice ouer highe for vs to reache vnto, and that on our parte wée are ſo weake and feeble, that it is pitie to beholde, then ſhall wée

learne to lament and bewaile our selues before God, and vnderstanding full well, that we are bound to do whatsoeuer he commandeth, we shall desire that he wil giue vs the power, that he will aide vs by his holie spirite, and that not onelie hée will support vs in our frailtie and weaknesse, but that he wil beginne and perfect that which is in vs, that he will giue vs a will and desire, and confirme and continue the same in vs, and that afterward, when hée shall haue giuen vs a constancie to persist in our desire, he wil giue vs also the power to accomplish all that which we shall haue well desired. Now withall GOD in this place sheweth, that when hée sendeth vs his worde, it is for this ende, to ioyne and knitte him selfe with vs, that wée also may be vnited vnto him: so that hée demaundeth nothing but obedience, that when wée shall become children vnto him, hée may shewe him selfe our louing father. Beholde then for what intent God will that his worde bée preached vnto vs: namely, that wée may be gathered vnder his winges, that he may protect and defende vs, that he may saue vs: yea, vnder this condition, that we come vnto him quietly, and that we suffer our selues to be gouerned by his worde, and to be subiect therevnto. True it is (as we haue alreadie touched) that this is not in our power, that God must bestow on vs the grace hereto, and that he giueth not this grace vnto all. But we are not here to inquire after the secrete counsell of God, what the cause is, that he reformeth and reneweth some by his holie spirite, and that he leaueth others to wander according to the corruption and wickednesse of their owne nature, and neuer draweth them backe into the right way. Wée must not entangle our selues in this Labyrinth: but let it suffice vs to knowe, that God would shewe that men are inexcusable, when hée saieth: O, I could wishe it might bée so: as if hée saide, That after that wée haue béene taught in his worde, wée haue no excuse, GOD shall not bée in fault, if wée be not saued. And why? For if wée walke as hée commaundeth vs., wée shall perceiue that this is the way to come to all blessednesse. And so let vs impute vnto our selues the cause of all those euils which shall happen vnto vs. And when wée shall bée afflicted, when GOD shall chastise and punishe vs by aduersitie and sundrie other afflictions, let vs knowe wée haue no cause to murmure or to complaine against him. For our selues are in great fault, because wée haue not followed his worde.

ye se in effect, what we haue to beare in minde vppon this place. True it is, that we must in the meane time haue recourse vnto his ayde and helpe, knowing that we are ouer weake on our part to accomplish the laiwe, and that we can not fulfil our duetie therein: nay, not come neare vnto it in what sort soeuer. But yet, if we walke not as it behoueth vs, we must alwayes passe vnder condemnation, knowing that al the fault lieth in our selues, and that when we are beaten and chastised with the roddes of God, that we can not say that this is beside al merite and desert of ours. And why? When we haue the woord of God, we haue a testimonie and witnesse, that he desireth to be vnited and ioyned vnto vs, and to execute the office of a father towardes vs, and to preserue vs in all prosperitie: were it not that we on our part did burie his grace, and hinder the course and proceeding thereof. Loe then howe men are by good right conuicted, to haue repelled, and despitefullie refused the gratious goodnesse of God, and to haue debarred him of all accesse and entrance, by shutting vp the doore, when they haue bene taught and instructed by his woord, and yet they haue not profited therein. And so this is a verie profitable admonition for vs, when we se that God wisheth in this place, that we would do that which he commaundeth vs, to the end it might be wel with vs. And hereby we se, that if we receiue his doctrine in all reuerence and humilitie, if we seeke to yelde all obedience therevnto, it can not be, but the ende and issue thereof shalbe prosperous and blessed, and that we shalbe certeine of our saluation. Nowe, it is true, that we must alwayes returne backe to this point, to pray God to giue vs the minde and will to serue him: but if thorough infirmitie we faile in our duetie, let vs learne to condemne our selues, that we may be absolued before him. And moreouer, let vs reioyce when we se that he procureth by all meanes our saluation, and seeketh to set vs forward therin alwayes, and as often as his holie woord is preached vnto vs: and let vs call to minde that which is saide in the Prouerbes of Solomon, That the solace and delight of the wisedome of God, is to dwell with men. Behold, howe God here protesteth, that when he sendeth his woord, it is to instruct vs in all perfection of wisedome, as if he sent his wisedome from the heauens. Yea, and to what end? For wisedome is wrought in here to speake, and to say: Behold my dainties and delites to dwell with the children of men. And this is as much as if God did displaie and laie

Pro. 8. 31

open his heart vnto vs, and that he saide: Beholde, I will binde my selfe with an holie and sacred bond vnto men, when I instruct them by my worde, and if they on their part be not wilde and vnrulie, they shall perceiue, that I will alwayes be in the middest of them, and neuer withdrawe my selfe from them. This ought well to inflame vs with such a reuerence of the worde of GOD, that wee endeuour with all our might, to profite therein, and not to suffer our selues to be at ame time turned from it, seeing the benefite thereof is inestimable: namelie, that by it our Lorde uniteth him selfe with vs. Nowe, it followeth in the text of Moses, howe God commaundeth the people, That euerie one goe his way into his tent, and that Moses abide there: and he addeth, I will tell thee all the commaundementes, and the statutes, and the lawes, which thou must teach the whole people. God againe in this place sheweth, that he ceaseth not to continue in teaching and instructing the people, albeit hee vse the meanes whiche hath bene declared: namelie, that Moses bee as an expositour of the will of God, and the messenger thereof vnto the people. This is well worthie the noting. For it serueth vnto this end, that wee may vnderstand, that God will alwayes hold vs vnto himselfe, and that he will not that our faith bee grounded vpon men, or depende on them. And it is verie needefull and requisite, that wee bee warned hereof. It is true, that those which followe their good meaninges, or which say, that they hold and sticke vnto those things, which haue beene determined by the Church, and by the auncient Fathers, may bee for a time so belotted, that if one tell them, they hold as it were by the aire, that they haue no certeine stay and assurance to leane vnto, when they so rest them selues wholie one men, they will bee still headie and obstinate: as we see the Papists, whom the deuill hath so bewitched, that they are content to stand vnto the resolutions, which men at their owne lust and pleasure haue made, and venturouslie despised the worde of GOD: yea, albeit men bring manifest witnesses and testimonies from it, to reproue their superstitions, all is one with them, they are so dull and obstinate, that it skilleth not with them, whether GOD bee contrarie vnto them or no. Men I say shall haue this presumptuous boldnesse for a time, to venter to goe on whither their fond imagination carrieth them, they shall indurate and harden them selues against GOD: but when they come to the triall, that GOD throughlie pricketh

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them with the vertue and power of his worde, behold they are so astonished and amazed, that they knowe not what may become of thē. So then let vs note, that wee shall haue no certaine and assured stay to rest vpon, except our faith be grounded on the worde of God, & that we may protest, that whatsoeuer we haue, we holde from him, & account that this is the only trueth, that wee wander not in our owne weenings and thinkinges, or propose vnto our selues the doctrine of men to leane vnto, and to stay and to rest vpon. When we heare that God in this place saith, I wil tell thee the things wherein thou shalt instruct them: let vs note, that wee must also in like manner leane wholie vpon him, that our faith must not be wauering and in doubt, being vnderpropped by the infallible veritie of his worde. And this is that we are to seeke after when wee come vnto a sermon, that wee may haue this article fullie ratified, and sealed vp in our consciences, that we haue the worde of God, wherein our life consisteth.

WIthall let vs also note, that GOD woulde bridle them in this place, which haue the charge of preaching his woorde, from all presumption of commending vnto the people any thing of their owne: but that they content themselues to bee faythfull dispensers of that which hee commaundeth, that they alwayes protest they haue serued GOD, forasmuch as they haue executed that whiche hee gaue them in commaundement, and haue deliuered the doctrine they preache, from the mouth of God, into the handes of men. Beholde what wee haue to note, we (I say) whome God hath ordained ministers to declare his worde, and vnto whom hee hath committed this office of teaching his people, that wee adde vnto his woorde nothing of our owne, which wee shall haue imagined: but wee declare simplie, and hauing that onely whiche we know to proceede from God. Nowe, to the end that the people shoulde not thinke, that God instructed them by halues, but in most absolute and perfect manner, he repeated in this place that whereof wee haue heeretofore entreated. The ordinaunces, the statutes, the commaundements, & ceremonies: as if he saide, that nothing shalbe wanting in his doctrine, and that the people ought not to desire any thing besides whatsoeuer. This hath beene before largelie expounded: but alwayes, when GOD vseth so many and diuerse woordes, where he might simplie and in a woorde haue saide the lawe: let vs note, that this is the better to withholde men, from attempting vppon

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anie foolish curiositie to adde anie thing vnto his lawe, as we see hath by nature we are ouermuch giuen thereto, and our fleshly minds alwayes stirre vs vp, to inuent I know not what nouelties and newfangled things. And loe howe in Popery euerie one hath enterprised to clout vnto the word of God his patch and piece, and how manie lawes they haue made one on the backe of another. And why? For it seemeth vnto them, that it sufficeth not to walke vprightly according vnto the word of God, but that it were further good and conuenient that their deuise should be made therein. Nowe, God contrarie wise saith, That if we haue his law, we shal haue his statutes, commaundements, ordinances, and rites: as if he said, That mortall men must not be so presumptuous and ouerweening, as to desire to seeme wiser than he. For when they shall haue made their longest discourses, they shall not finde any thing which they can amende, or whereunto they may make addition: yea, let them know, that al that they shall seeke to put vnto of their owne, shall not bee superfluous onelie and vnprofitable, but shall marre all: as if one would mingle vinegre with wine. And now God, hauing spoken in this sort, warneth them further, that they beware they obserue that which he shall commaunde them, without anie turning, either vnto the right hand or vnto the left. In these words our Lord declareth, that hee wil not that his law be honoured of men, in approuing it onely with the mouth, as if we would seeme to be acquited of all the dutie we beare thereto, when we doe no more than this: but he sheweth, that for to retaine vs vnder his subiection, and in his seruice, he hath published his lawe, and at this day will haue it preached. For heerein it is his pleasure to proue, whether he shall dispatch and come to anie agreement with vs, as with a quiet and tractable people, whome hee hath nowe lured to his traine. Let vs therfore diligentlie note, that when we come vnto a sermon, this is not to say, that the doctrine we heare, is holie and good: God shalbee much beholding vnto vs, when wee haue pronounced that his word is worthie to bee receiued. Yée will not that we be his iudges. I graunt that we owe vnto him this confession, that when we shal haue heard his worde, euery one acknowledge, that it is the pure & sincere veritie, that there is no other righteousnesse, nor iustice, nor wisedome, beside that which is there contained: but in the meane time we must proceede further: namely, to order our selues vnto the seruice and honor of God. Behold, one pro-

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ticable point which we haue to gather vpon this place. Againe, wée are diligentlie to obserue that which he saith, Take héede ye doe that I command. For hereby God sheweth that we must seriouslie applie all our might and power herein: for men shall not followe God by sléeping. seeing that when they vse the greatest force they may with them selues, they shall with much adoe drawe their legges after them, their infirmitie and weakenesse of nature is so great. Let vs not thinke then to acquite our dutie towardes God, without bestowing much paine and labour therein: for the thing is of great difficultie, considering what ones we are: namelie, sloive and ouer lazie to bestirre our selues about that which is good. Nay, I say yet further, that albeit God hath affectioned & moued vs with some desire thereto, albeit he gouerneth vs with his holie spirite, the thing will not be ouer easie. For if he leaueth vs to remaine such as we are, wée shall not onelie be sloive herein, but we shall draw cleane backward from that which he willeth vs: if he call vs vnto him selfe, we shal retule and flée backe from him: yea, we shalbe forced to followe that which is euill, so farre shall we be from being able to desire any manner of way, that which is good. But note we that which wée haue alreadie touched, that although God hath giuen vs some good affection, albeit he hath set vs in some good way, yet are we stil slouthful, and loth to remoue one foote: whereas a minute of time ought to serue, we had néede of an houre, we winch & fling in such sort when we are put forward: and if happilie we moue one steppe, either we stumble, or else we start backe two paces forone, or we take so grieuous falles as it is pitie to beholde. So, it is not without good cause, that God saieth here, Take héede ye do that I commaund you: as if he saide, True it is, that my lawe is giuen you that you should put it in practise, and to yéelde obedience thereunto, but thinke ye not, that this is so easie to be done. Therefore, let euerie one prepare himselfe with such diligence to walke after my commaundements, that ye thinke and meditate on them, that ye be diligent to bestowe all paine in them, that ye take a full taste and sauour of them, that yée bee vigilant to stand on your watch, for feare that you bée not turned aside: be yée therefore attentiue and heedefull herein. Thus wée sée briefly, that our Lorde exhorteth vs in this place seriouslie to trauell and bestirre our selues, when question is of walking vnder his obedience. And why? For the things he requireth of vs, are not so easily performed.

And moreouer, wée are so euill disposed, as is lamentable to beholde, that except wée bée pricked on, and driuen thereto, as by force, we can not set one foote forwarde as wée ought in our dutie. It is needfull therefore, that wée awaken our selues better, to bée more diligent and attentiue, and to stand alwayes more warilie on our gard, to accomplish that which our Lorde commaundeth vs. Nowe he afterwarde addeth, That this must be done without turning either to the right hande or to the left, but that altogether they walke in that way, which he hath shewed them. True it is, that this place shalbe expounded more at large in the twelfth Chap. of this booke: but yet wée must not so passe it ouer in this place, but that we vnderstand what God meant to say in forbidding vs, That wée bee not turned, neither vnto the right hãd nor to the left. For he sheweth vs, that his pleasure and wil is in all things to be hearkened vnto of vs, nothing whatsoeuer excepted. Now this importeth two thinges: that is, we neither adde vnto, nor diminish any thing from his lawe. To adde any thing is, as if wée woulde turne on the right hande. For they which adde vnto the lawe of God, doe it as thinking that it is not enough to obserue all that which is therein conteined, but that it were good to put somewhat more thereunto. Loe howe men would haue some place for their fantasies, that if they can bethinke themselues of any thing, it séemeth them that God hath forgotten it, and that it were good to bée obserued. And beholde what hath bene the cause of making so many ordinances, so many lawes, ceremonies, in Poperie. The Iewes had the like vice reigning among them as it is vpbraided them, that by their traditions they had set at naught the statutes and commandements of God. So then let vs beware howe wée walke rightlie, I meane on the right hande, to turne our
Mat. 15.3. selues from the way which God hath shewed vs. And why? Wée turne then on the right hand, when we will bée too wise, and too iust, and when wée thinke it is good to doe more than wée are commanded. But herein wée are the seruantes and ministers of the deuil, for GOD disalloweth whatsoeuer wée shall adde vnto his worde, hée will no such medlie. Now wée decline vnto the left hand, when wée diminishe and take away any thing from the worde of God, namelie, when wée thinke wée haue done enough, if wée haue discharged halfe our dutie, and that for the rest he giueth vs leaue to follow

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our owne lustes and desires. A man that shal not bee subiect to some number of vices, will happilie delite to acquite himselfe towardes God so far forth: but because he cannot restraine himselfe from some one, he would that God should notwithstanding be contented, & giue him leaue to cōdition with him, to say: Wel, if I misse in this thing, I wil make a recompense in another. But take we heede of walking on the left hand, that is to say, of diminishing anie thing from the word of God: for when he hath forbidden men murder, he hath forbidden them also to steale, & to commit adulterie. Wee must therefore without any replie yeelde our obedience vnto him in all things. For as we ought not to adde any thing vnto the lawe of God, so is it not lawful to take anie thing from it: but we must walke in all the way he sheweth vs. And nowe, when hee saieth, The way, it is to exhort vs to hold our selues therein, as wee shal see in the end of the booke. Behold the way, walke ye therein, will Moses say: as if he said, who soeuer turneth himselfe aside from the doctrine which I set before you, he wandereth, he runneth but acrosse the fields, & the further hee runneth on, the further he is from the end of his iournie. So in this place. Walke ye in the way, that is to say: Wander ye not wilfullie ye wretched ones, straie not from the way wherin your God leadeth you, ye can not misse of your way by folowing of him: but if you giue your selues ouer to go whither your own head leadeth you, god must in the end declare vnto you, that you shalbe but as straying & wādering beastes, for that you haue not kept forwarde your course in the right way. And so know ye, that the word of God is your way wherin you must walke. If this word were wel imprinted in our minds, we should be held shorter, than to runne wandring at rouers, & ranging whither soeuer our flitting fansies & desires shall carrie vs, as we accustomablie vse to do: we should (I say) bee helde backe in this way which is prescribed vs: for our God sheweth vs continually which is the way. And yet for all this men enter into their disputes, and make long questions: what is to bee done? and what is not to bee done? As if it had not beene saide, That GOD neuer openeth his mouth, but to shewe vs the right and perfect waye: and when hee sheweth it vs, doe not wee him great wrong and iniurie if we followe him not? And doe we not accuse him, as if hee had lost all his time and paine hee bestoweth to instruct vs? Wee

Deu. 28. 9.

see now what this worde (way) importeth: namelie, that without the woorde of GOD, there is nothing but errour and deceite, and that men facte abuse themselues, when they shall thinke to doe well, except they leaue themselues to be gouerned by the woorde of God, which sheweth vs the best and the streightest way. And purposely he saith, All the way. For hee will not parte stakes with men in this place, as they desire hee should, that is, they would alwayes reserue some thing, I know not what, vnto themselues: they woulde serue GOD by peece meale (as wee say:) but beholde, GOD on the contrarie side saith, I must be obayed of all, throughout all points, or else I renounce you, I will none of you. So then, will wee approue our life vnto GOD: Wee must not thinke to yeelde him obedience in part onelie, but wee must take heede we order our whole life vnto that which he commandeth vs, in such sorte, that wee may truelie protest and say, That wee haue holde our selues in al the way of the Lorde.

But here one might make a question, whether it be possible, that we may walke altogether in the way of God: For contrariwise, seeing it is so, that men doe not the good they desire to doe, it shalbe much when we shall haue endeuoured to come to the right way, and to goe as far forward towards the end as we may, though we come not thereto. Saint Paule himselfe complaineth, that he could not do
Rom. 9. 17. that, which he had desired for to discharge his duetie towardes God. But here is no speaking of such perfection as is required in the law: but we must onlie vnderstand, that God will haue men employ themselues with all diligence in his seruice, and that they inforce themselues thereto, that they make their race therein, albeit they can not attaine the end thereof. Therefore, although for all our life time wee go as drailing our legges after vs, and that wee come not fully and perfectlie vnto God, yet must we proceede hereunto, and goe on forward, not in part onlie, but in all that which is contained in the law. It is true, that we cānot acquite our selues herein, in such sorte, that there be a full and correspondent agreement betweene the woorde of God, and our life: but when wee shall haue this desire to order our selues vnto God, and to conforme our selues vnto his wil, not in one point or article onelie, but in all without exception: and when wee shall haue bestowed our whole trauell and industrie herein, beholde, howe wee shall holde vs in all the waye of GOD.

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For he beareth with vs in such sort, that he accepteth in good part such a desire, when he seeth vs to go roundly to worke in his seruice, & that we double not with him, & that we reserue not to our selues our own lustes and desires, nor yeld vs the libertie and leaue to fulfil them, but that we labour to please and to serue him as much as we may, and according vnto the grace which is giuen vs. Now withall he also adioyneth, That they may prosper, and that it may be well both with them, and with their children. Wherein he giueth vs to vnderstand, that (as we haue alreadie touched) all the miseries and afflictions which wee endure in this worlde, are so many chastisements and corrections for our sins. And we cannot say that we are any other way miserable and vnhappy, but by our owne fault. True it is, euerie one desireth to bee at his ease, and in prosperitie, wee neede not to bee taught to wishe this vnto our selues, for our nature leadeth vs hereunto: but for all this, it seemeth that we haue conspired our owne miserie & wretchednesse. For the meane to prosper is this, that we be obedient vnto God, and then he shall blesse vs, in such sort, that we shall feele the fruites thereof in all things. But whate we will not yeld him the obedience which is due vnto him, and therefore we must needes bee depriued of his blessing, yet must needes resist and refuse vs, as if wee were not worthie to bee in the number of his creatures. And so let vs note, that God would in this place reproue men, & shew them that they are themselues the cause of all the miserie and wretchednesse they suffer in this worlde, and that they must attribute it to their sinne and wickednesse. But hee would moreouer withall allure his vnto himselfe, when hee setteth before them a reward: as if he said: Go to, there is great cause why I should be serued of you, I deserue it full well at your handes, though you haue small regard of mee: for seeing that you are my creatures, is it not good reason that you bee my subiects, and render all obedience vnto me? Ought you not for the whole time of your life to bee giuen ouer vnto me? But yet I will not request you to serue me for gratuities: I will for bee mine owne right in this behalfe, so that whereas ye are bound to doe all that I commande you, without looking or hoping for any thing: loe, yet I tell you, that I am at hande, to blesse you, & to make you prosper, when you shal serue me. When our Lord speaketh thus, he therewith that he will in most louing and amiable wise, winne vs vnto himselfe, that he will (as it were) bynde

their heart, that they might be the better affectionated, & more willingly disposed to serue and please him: seeing that hee commeth not vnto them, with such rigor and seueritie as he might: but yeelding of the right which apperteineth vnto him, chooseth rather to execute the office of a Father, saying, That if we will bee his children, hee will bee a liberall and bountifull Father towardes vs: and albeit hee oweth vs nothing of duetie, yet hee will bestowe a rewarde on vs for the seruice which wee shall haue donne him. Nowe hereby wee are admonished that it pleaseth God, by so great gentlenesse and liberalitie, to allure and winne vs to himselfe. But wee must not hereupon inferre, that men may merite and deserue any thing by seruing of God. As the Papistes, when they heare suche places, they runne to their merites: and it seemeth vnto them that GOD is further bounde and beholding vnto them than he hath promised. But God contrariwise meaneth to shew vs that he is readie to applie himselfe to vs, and to the fashion of men, that he desireth nothing els but to win vs by all gentlenesse vnto his obedience. And this is not for any profite that he receiueth thereby: as in very deede, what profite shall he receiue when we shall haue accomplished his whole lawe? Is this anie way to his gaine and aduantage? No. But it maketh for our saluation. Wee see then what the intent and purpose of God is, & what we haue to note vpõ this sentẽce. So let vs learne that when wee shall haue obeied our God, if hee make vs to prosper, that this is not for that hee oweth vs any thing, and that wee haue deserued it, and that we may vaunt that hee giueth vs no more than we deserue: but it pleaseth him to display and lay open his bountifull goodnesse towardes vs, euen to call that a rewarde and recompense, which he of his meere and free liberalitie giueth vs, without being therefore bounde and indebted vnto vs. Moreouer, when hee chastiseth vs, and that wee are subiect to so manie miseries, let vs knowe, that wee doe but gather in the fruites of our owne seede. Because wee haue ledde an euill life, our Lorde must needes shewe some signe and token of his anger, that it may bee knowne hee is Iudge of the worlde. But hee hath also as well a regarde vnto our profite: that is, that wee might be sorry for our faultes, and bee in displeasure with our selues for them, and that wee should haue our recourse vnto him, in true and vnfeigned repentance. Lo howe GOD, when hee sheweth his anger towards vs, ceaseth

not to declare his loue: for hée séeketh to winne vs vnto him selfe. Hée seeth that we are brought asléepe in our sinnes, and hée aweketh vs, knowing that it is expedient and necessarie that he shoulde so doe. Thus we sée what we haue to note vpon this place. Now in the ende, Moses speaketh of the lande they were to possesse, and saieth, That thou maiest prosper in the lande whiche I shall giue thée. And againe for the second time, he placeth this sentence, That it may be well with you in the land which you shall possesse. Now it séemeth at the first sight, that God promiseth no other rewarde than in this earthly and transitorie life. If it were so, the hope of the people of Israel had bene cleane beaten downe. But let vs note, that our Lorde hath vsed towardes this people an other meane than with vs: albeit it tendeth to the same ende. For the sacrifices which were ordeined in the lawe, were not to withdrawe the people from the saluation which wée haue in Jesus Christ: but they serued rather that GOD might signifie that men are condemned, that they haue no other meane to be reconciled vnto him, than this which they haue by our Lorde Jesus Christ. Nowe for all this, men ceassed not to kill brute beastes for their offeringes, and GOD saide: Your sinnes shall be pardoned, when you shall haue killed for mée a calfe, a lambe, or a shéepe. It séemed them that God woulde appoint the remission of sinnes by these sacrifices of brute beastes: but he did not. This was to conduct the people, after suche a grosse manner, to the redemption which in the end was obteined vs in the person of our Lorde Jesus Christ. As much was signified by the land of Chanaan: God therein woulde from the beginning propose the eternal inheritance of saluation vnto the children of Abraham, in saying to Abraham, I am thy excéeding great rewarde. He promiseth not the lande to Abraham, therein to rest him selfe: but he will that Abraham put his whole trust and affiaunce in him, that hée raise and lift vp his hope aboue al the world, & that he waite for euerlasting life for him selfe, and for his whole race. But it was expedient, because our Lorde Jesus Christ was not yet appeared, because the vaile of the Temple was not yet broken: it was (I say) expedient and néedefull, that this lande of Chanaan shoulde bée as it were a pledge thereof, because this was fullie promised him for his inheritaunce. Let vs therefore diligentlie note, when it is sayde, That thou mayest prosper in the land,

Heb. 9. 8. 13. 14. 22.

Leuit. 16. 15. 16.

Gen. 15. 1

land, that God meant not to bestie his people in this present life, but by this meanes pleseth him to conduct them higher: namely, to the hope of immortalitie which he had promised them. Neuertheles our Lord promiseth his blessing in such sort vnto this people that euen in this life they shal perceiue it, and haue thereof some tast, waiting to haue the full enioying thereof, when they shall be withdrawne out of this worlde. And at this day we ought also to call to minde the testimonie
1.Tim.4.8 of S. Paule. That when we shall feare God, we haue the promises of the present life, & of the life to come. For God will in this life giue vs some feeling of his goodnes, to the end we might thereby be led vnto an higher hope, and that we also learne to receiue the benefites of God in such sort in this world, as that we be persuaded we shall bee satisfied with them, when we shalbe come into his kingdome, where we shall enioy them in all fulnesse and plentie.

Now let vs cast our selues downe before the face of our good God, with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them better than we haue done, vntil we be led to a true repentance, and that more and more feeling our owne wretchednesse, wee may learne to resist all the affections of our flesh, and all our wicked and peruerse desires, & not this only, but that cursed presumption which is in vs, of attempting to do that which we thinke good: that nothing may hinder vs to follow the pure and simple worde of our GOD, knowing that this is the true and perfect rule to order vs by, that wee attempt to adde nothing thereto, but simply rest in that which is therein conteined, to profite more and more therein, vntill that hauing atchieued and ended our course here on earth, wee come vnto that heauenlie rest, where vnto he calleth vs: and in the meane time pray we him to reach vs out his hand to stay vs, when we shal seeke vnto him, and call on him, in all our needs & necessities. That it will please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but vnto all people and nations of the earth, &c.

The

The 16. Sermon.

Deut. Chap. 6.

1 These are the commaundementes, ordinaunces, and lawes, which the Lord your God hath commaunded me to teach you, that ye might doe them in the lande whither ye goe to possesse it.

2 That thou mightest feare the Lorde thy God, by keeping all his ordinaunces and commandements, which I commaũd to thee, al the dayes of thy life, thou, thy sonne, and thy sonnes sonne, that thy dayes may bee prolonged.

WE haue often heretofore sayne, how Moses did put the people in minde of the things contained in the lawe: & euen yesterday we sawe how to the same purpose he made mention of them, and yet agayne in this place he doeth the like. Howbeit, this is no needlesse or vnprofitable repetition, seeing that men haue so soone forgotte the thinges they learne in the schole of GOD, except the memorie of them, for their better remembrance, be often refreshed. And yee see there needeth nothing to turne vs aside from our dutie herein: for we are so muche inclined vnto vanitie, that there is nothing more harder than to reteyne vs vnder the obedience of God. As soone as we haue conceiued a fantasie, it carrieth vs away headlong, & we remember no more what God hath said vnto vs. Moreouer, because he seeketh no other thing than to win vs vnto himself, hee must rote out of vs those false opinions wherewith we are already forepossessed. For it is with vs as with a ground which hath lien fallow a long time, wherein a man must bestow exceeding greate labour, before he can apply it to some profitable vse. And that is the cause why Moses saith agayne, That these are the commandements, and ordinaunces, and lawes, which the Lord hath committed vnto him, that he deliuer them vnto the people, and that they bee obserued.

Now by these wordes he signifieth, that God will reteyne the people in his obedience: when he seemeth to say, What meane yée, yee wretched ones to wander? Loe, I deliuer vnto you my law: when you shal hold your selues in this doctrine, you cannot erre: this is the way of saluation, therefore keepe your selues in it. Now for all this, men are ! til wandring: they are borne away headlong hither & thither, & God continueth to rayne them with ỳ bridle: as when an headstrong horse is hardly ruled, the rider restrayneth him backe with bit & bridle, not for one time onely, but so long as he continueth wild & vntamed. Yée see then how God vseth the same order with his people. And hereby he sheweth that ỳ mind of man is ful of rebellion, or full of lightnesse and rashnes, & that he cannot wholly rest himself on ỳ word of God, wherin notwithstanding our whole saluation & happines consisteth. Seeing then it is so, let vs note, ỳ vnder the person of ỳ people of Israel, we are here warned, that whē God hath set before vs his word, we must not think on it for one day onely, but ỳ we ought to exercise our selues therein all the time of our life. And when wee heare this, Behold the statutes, Behold the ordinances, Behold the commaundementes, which I propose vnto you, we must remember, that it is not for vs to establishe lawes and rules to governe our life by, but that this authoritie apperteineth onely vnto God. Moreouer he hath also admonished vs, that hée hath shewed vs the right way. Let vs therefore followe it, and walke therein, let vs not make further inquiry what we ought to doe: for there remayneth no doubting when our Lord hath once spoken: we must no longer alleadge, I know not whether this bee good, I know not whether somewhat else bee too bée added. Content we our selues with that which GOD hath shewed vs: for he shall alwayes be a good maister to teache vs, if so bée wée bée not peruerse, and euill scholers to learne vnder him. And for this cause here is againe mention made of commaundementes, statutes, and ordinances, that wée might not thinke that God would instruct vs by halues. There is then in his law comprised a full perfection of all wisedome: so that there resteth nothing, but that wee yelde obedience therevnto, that wée bée not so curious, as to desire more than God sheweth vs, that we haue no foolish deuotions, which leade vs wandring hither and thither: knowing that God hath not enuied them which were vnder his charge the knowledge of anie thing behoueful for them, but hath taught them all that which was

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profitable and necessarie for them. Let vs therefore governe our selues according to his will, let vs apply all our senses thereto. Let his lawe suffice and content vs, albeit the whole worlde frame & reiect vs, the matter shall not much skill, wee haue our Iudge. And so, although the world wander after vaine fantasies, although euery one forge vnto himselfe, that which seemeth him best, let vs alwayes consider of appearing before the tribunall seate of our God, and that vnto him we must render our account. Now hee hath deliuered vs his lawe, and by that he will iudge vs. And therefore let vs leaue al that the world imagineth, & know that all is but vanitie & lying. Wherefore all Moses addeth that concerning his office hée hath deliuered nothing of his owne. And this Protestation is well worthy to bee noted. For wee must remember what hath bin before saide, that Moses was the most excellent Prophet that euer God raised, & yet notwithstanding he taketh to himselfe in this place no suche libertie, as to teach any thing according to his owne iudgement. For he knew well that he himselfe was a mortall man, subiect to the lawe, as were others. Behold why he protesteth that that which he bringeth, is that which he hath receiued from God, and that he dispenseth and deliuereth it as it were from hand to hande. Whence Moses doeth this, who will dare to say, that it is lawfull for him to passe further? And yet we see what is happened herein. For among the whole rabble of Papists, is there any so geuen to heare what God shall say, as to preferre his word before the doctrine of men? Nay: but they haue their holy mother the Church, as they terme it, they haue their determinations, their decrees, their statutes: and they thinke it sufficient to haue this couerture of the Church, and in the meane time, they robbe God of his authoritie, to cloth men which are but rottennesse therewith. Behold an intollerable sacriledge, when GOD shal no longer be a Lawgeuer to conduct his people, and to holde them vnder his yoke, but that men will vsurpe and challenge to themselues such an authoritie. So muche the more heedefully ought wee to obserue that which is here contayned: namely, that Moses albeit he was as an Angell of heauen, although God had exalted him aboue all men, though he had bin in the mount fourtie daies without eating or drinking any thing, to shewe that he was no longer of the number of others: yet notwithstanding, when he came from this heauenly glory, and as it were from the companie of Angels, he humbleth

himselfe, and declareth that he commendeth vnto the people nothing of his owne, that he will not feede them with fansies and dreames of his owne head, but that he is contented to haue heard what GOD hath pronounced, and that he reciteth it as a faithfull seruant, which addeth nothing thereto, which falsifieth not the commission which is geuen vnto him. Wee se then what wee haue againe to beare in mind vppon this place. There followeth now the exhortation which he addeth, that is, That the people discharge themselues in keeping of the law. As if he said, That it is not geuen for men only to confesse, that all that it conteineth is good, iust, and of greate equity: but to this end also, that men shew whether they be obedient vnto GOD, or no. And that is the cause why he saith, That thou feare the Lord thy GOD, and that thou keepe his commaundements and statutes. Vnder this word of feare, he signifieth that God, by declaring his lawe, meant to make a proofe whether we will serue him, or no. For albeit we obserue all the commaundements in such sort that men can finde no fault with vs: yet if this feare of GOD be not rooted in our hartes if we beare him not this reuerence, to desire to be his, all the time of our life, this outward obseruing of his commaundements, shall be but a friuolous shew, and a pompe of great vanity. For we must not think that God is contented with that which outwardly appeareth although it be highly prized and esteemed of men, yet is it but as a vapour of smoke before him.

Wee ought therefore to beginne at this point, if wee will obserue the law of God duely, and in such sort, as our life may be agreable vnto God: namelie, that we beare him all reuerence, that wee seeke to be vnder his hande, vnder his guyde and direction: that wee seeke to doe him homage as our Soueregne King, wee seeke to dedicate our selues vnto him, as to our Creatour, we seeke to honour him as our Father. When this affection and desire shall bee in vs, then haue we the beginning of the whole lawe, and of all righteousnesse: and that is the cause why it is saide, That the true wisedome is the feare of God. And when we will know whether wee haue profited in the lawe of GOD, wee must sound our hearts to make the triall hereof, to feele if wee haue such a zeale and desire, that GOD bee honoured and glorified of vs. For if there bee such a feare in the hearte, the fruites thereof will appeare, both in our handes, and in our feete, and in all the partes and members of our bodies

Prou. 1. 7.

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as God hath also ordeined this rule when he published his lawe. So that they which boast themselues of the feare of GOD, when theyr life is loosed to all wickednesse, their owne tongues tell them they lie, and they shew full well, how impudent and past shame they are, when they vaunt so much of the feare of God. We sie then a place, which is well worthy to be obserued: wherin Moses first declareth, that to serue God aright, it behoueth that our heartes be wholly geuen ouer vnto him, that it sufficeth not, that in outward appearance wee haue all the vertues that a man might imagine, except such an affection, and inward desire of the heart goe before. Agayne, that the feare of GOD is no hidden and idle thing, although it be in the heart of men, yet must it appeare and shewe it selfe in their life. For it is the hearte, which gouerneth both the handes, and the feete, and all the other partes, and members of the bodie. We must therefore learne to shew by effect and experience that we feare GOD, by ordering our whole life according vnto his will. Nowe hereby we may wel gather, that God disalloweth al things which men attempt beside his worde: as the Papistes are continuall men and religious (as they say) in the seruice of God: but in the meane time, what doe they? They trauell much, & are neuer the niere: for they profite nothing, because in the whole woorshippe of GOD, which they pretende, there is nothing, but the inuentions and deuises of men. To serue God, is to mumble a few of smal prayers, and to touch before their moppets and idols, to trudge from Altar to Altar, to chaunt their Masses, to gad on Pilgrimage, to fast suche a day in the honor of such & such a Saint, to eate no flesh on Fridayes nor Saturdayes: briefle it is nothing els, but a Dungeon of suche like trumperies, whatsoeuer they haue vnder the shadowe and title of the seruice of God. But shall one finde that God euer sounded one word or sillable hereof? No, all this hath been deuised by men. Let vs now consider by this place, whether God accepteth such a seruice as good and lawfull: nay contrariwise, he saith, That thou feare the Lorde thy God, & that thou obserue all his commaundements. But when men turne themselues aside from such away, and followe their owne fantasies, and whatsoeuer shall haue beene forged by men, they sufficiently declare, that there is no feare of GOD in them: for otherwise they would offer vnto him ẏ sacrifice which he adoue al other preferreth, namely, obedience, as hereof it is entreated in the first bulke of Samuel,

1. Sam. 15. 23.

muel the sixtienth Chapter. That if men hearken not vnto the voyce of God, to subiect themselues thereto, but contrariwise followe that which shall haue beene inuented in their owne braine, or forged and deuised by men, it is as idolatrie: yea, as the sinne of Witchcraft, which is detestable in the sight of God. Behold, how the holie Ghost speaketh hereof, although mortall men are of a clean contrary iudgement. Now therefore we see how Moses hath here declared, that when we shall vnfeignedly and in deede feare God, we will doe him this honour, to be gouerned according vnto his will, wee will not graunt men this leaue too leade and conduct vs whether it seemeth them good: but when God shall speake, wee will knowe that euery mouth must be stopped, & that our eares must bee opened to heare & to receiue whatsoeuer he shall say vnto vs. But yet it sufficeth not ẏ euery one for his owne part onely imploy himselfe to serue and honor God, but we must procure and endeuour as muche as in vs lyeth, that he be adored and worshipped of the whole worlde: yea, we must labour that his seruice may endure and continue after our death, ẏ the name of God liue not and die with vs, when we shalbe taken out of the world: but that it remayne and abide vnto all posteritie. And loe what is the cause why Moses saith, Their children & those which shall issue from their race, shall continue to serue God, and to obserue his lawe.

Let vs therefore diligently note, that Moses in this place not onelie exhorteth euery one for his owne time to serue and obey GOD, by conforming his life vnto the lawe which hee hath deliuered, but he will that Fathers bestowe all their paynes to instruct their children, that we may leaue such a seede after vs, if it bee possible, as that God be worshipped of our posterity, that his name be alwayes purely and sincerely called vpon, & that by this meane, they which shalbe descended from our loynes, may be blessed, and that the couenant of God wherein our saluation is conteyned, endure for euer, and neuer perish, albeit we are mortall & of small continuance. But we are so farre from discharging our duetie in this doctrine, that wee may sie fathers geue suche examples vnto their children, that it seemeth they haue conspired to abolish and to take cleane away the feare of God, and the whole obseruation of his lawe. We ought not therefore to maruell, if GOD also withdrawe himselfe from vs, and that it seemeth that hee will cut of quite all the benefites and

blessinges which he had bestowed on vs. For are we worthy vnto whom he should continue them, seeyng wee are so retchlesse and negligent to procure that his seruice and worshipp may continue in his entire and perfect estate? And yet this shoulde [illegible] vs to so good a purpose (as I haue said) that it be not spoken in vayne. Let vs therefore labour with all our might, to teach those which shall come after vs, in such sorte, that the woorshippe of GOD, and his seruice may continue for euer, and that men alwayes knowe and acknowledge him for the Father and Sauiour of all the worlde, and geue themselues ouer fully and wholly vnto him. Withall Moses hath adioyned that whereof he had before spoken, that this is, To the ende that their dayes may bee prolonged, and that GOD may make the people to prosper, according to the promise which he made vnto their fathers that he would geue them a land flowing with milke & hony.

Wee haue already expounded what Moses hath vnderstande by this worde: namely, that God, albeit by one word he may constrain vs to serue him, notwithstanding vseth towardes vs a most mylde and amiable manner to winne vs to himselfe, when he promiseth vs a reward, when wee shall haue serued him: not that our woorkes deserue any thing, or that he is any thing at all bound vnto vs. But when he gratifieth vs so, and is in such wise beneficiall towards vs, it is to this end, that wee may bee so muche the more linely touched, & that we may serue him with a more ardent zeale & desire. For shall wee not be ouer wicked and vnthankfull, when we heare that God of his owne good will bindeth himselfe vnto vs, and that he wil propose vnto vs a reward and recompence: shall wee not I say bee ouer wicked and vnthankfull, if wee apply not our selues wholly vnto his seruice? Wee are his, and whatsoeuer we are able to doe, we owe vnto him: as our Lorde Jesus Christ speaketh plainely heereof: Who are you? sayeth he. I demaund of you, when a man shall haue a seruaunt: yea, a slaue, whom he shall burden and presse as an Dee, or an horse, whether if this slaue haue done him any seruice, he wil rise from the table to serue him, when hee returneth from his worke? No: for all that which the bondslaue doeth, hee oweth of duety to his maister and superiour. So you owe all vnto God (saieth Jesus Christ) & he oweth you nothing. But yet God of his owne free good will byndeth himselfe to promise vs, if we serue him, we shalbee well recompensed, and perceiue our labour & payne shall not bee lost.

Luke. 17. 7.

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And for what end and purpose doth he this? This is euen by gentlenesse to breake our heart. For (as I haue already said) we are tooto wicked, if wee bee not altogether inflamed to serue GOD, when wee see that it pleaseth him, of his meere goodnesse, to propose vnto vs a reward, and to promise vs a recompence, when wee are in no respect worthy thereof. And withall let vs also note, that when God shall haue passed a thousand contractes with vs, to reward and recompence our workes, it wanteth so much that wee may say, hee oweth vs any thing, that he might rather accurse and detest vs. For who is he among vs, which obserueth the lawe as were requisite? If wee obserue one article therof, wee faile in an hundred, and when we think to fulfil that which God hath cōmanded vs in his law, we falter therein, wee traile our legges after vs: there is alwayes suche great imperfection and weakenesse in vs, that wee can neuer runne in such wise as wee ought, and as it were requisite. We shall then bee accursed and condemned, when God shall iudge vs in any rigor and seuerity. So then, men must not here daunt themselues of obteining any reward which they haue merited, nor boast of their works: but rather let them know, that al the promises which God hath giuen in his lawe, import with them a condition, and therefore should be vnprofitable vnto vs, by reason that none discharge themselues of their duetie, except God would accept of vs, and beare with vs for his meere bountie and goodnesse. And hereby we see what rage and madnesse this is in the Papists, when they boast themselues of their merites, that it seemeth them, they haue to contract and couenaunt with GOD, and they so venturously vppon a diuelishe ouerweening and boldnesse, make their account, that they think God is very much bound and beholding vnto them. But what profes haue they of the satisfactions, their works, their merites? And where shall a man find those merites? O, we haue done (say they) this and that: no remedie, but wee must make vp our accountes with God. And behold on the contrary side God, who requireth that wee serue him in all, and through all, which wee are neuer able to doe, as wee haue seene heretofore, and as it is sufficiently handled and declared in many other places. Now let all the worlde examine themselues, to see, whether there may herein be found one which hath accomplished the lawe. But so farre we shalbe from finding any such, that there is not one which may protest, that he hath done the hundred part of that

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which is in the lawe required. Therefore al muſt confeſſe that they are accurſed. Yea, in this ſo ſmall portion, and ſo little as may be, wherein men acquite themſelues, ſhall bee alwayes founde ſome wickednelle, and ſome blottes or other. So then, God ſhal iuſtly reiect & haue in deteſtation al that we bring, and are able to doe. Let men therfore be ouerwhelmed & confounded with ſhame, & let thē confeſſe that they are al culpable & guiltie before God. Wherfore let vs note, that this promiſe cannot be accompliſhed, but that God beareth with vs, & reſpecteth not ſo many vices & infirmities as are in vs, but by his mercie hideth and burieth them. Therfore our workes are thē receiued and approued by God, when he reſpecteth not what they are, but accepteth them, through the vertue of the death & paſſion of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as good & holy. And albeit there be alwayes many blots & ſtaines in vs: yea, much ſtinking corruption, except it ſhoulde be waſhed away by the blood of Jeſus Chriſt: yet he alwayes accepteth vs by the meanes thereof, and no otherwiſe. So, let vs learne to boaſt our ſelues, and glorifie in the mere and only mercy of God, and not vaunt vs of any merites. And in the meane time let vs not ceaſe to be incited and ſtirred vp with ſo much greater zeale to ſerue him, when we ſee that hee will allure and winne vs vnto himſelf by ſuch mildnelle and gentlenelle. Yea Moſes ſheweth, that whatſoeuer God promiſeth vnto his people, whē they ſhall obſerue his lawe, procedeth frō this fountaine, rather than from any obligation. And this is that which he ſaith, As God hath promiſed to thy Fathers: as if he ſaide, Beloued, ſerue God, and he ſhal bee a good maiſter vnto you. And thinke not that you haue loſt your time & labour when you ſhall haue obſerued his lawe: for you ſhall haue a large reward, which is made readie for you. But withall conſider yee whence it procedeth: Behold the fountaine (ſaith hee:) that is, that before yee were borne and brought into this worlde, God hath promiſed your Fathers to bring them into a land which floweth with milke and hony. Moyſes thus leading the people vnto this promiſe which had bene made vnto the Patriarches, sheweth ſufficiently that God maketh no new promiſe, but that he ratifieth and confirmeth that which he had ſaid. And why? Is it that he was bound to them which were not yet borne? No, but becauſe he had loued their fathers, as he hath aboue ſaid. It is true, that Moſes now ſheweth, that the people was partaker of ſuch a promiſe, if ſo be they ſhoulde obſerue the lawe of God.

But what? We must yet alwayes come to this point, that men are vtterly confounded, if they will oppose themselues against GOD, alledging anie dignitie or worthinesse of their owne, and that they shall alwayes remaine in their condemnation, they shall finde that they are al accursed. It behoueth therefore that they haue their onely refuge vnto the mercie of GOD: and that they knowe, that when they shall haue forced themselues to walke according vnto his lawe, that God shall owe them nothing, albeit hee wil not leaue to accomplish that which he hath promised them, euen by his meere goodnesse and free mercie. Loe then howe this place ought to bee vnderstoode. Nowe seeing he in this place speaketh of the lande promised vnto the Iewes, let vs note, that at this day we ought to be by many degrées more incited and prouoked to serue GOD, seeing hee hath dedicated the whole earth vnto himselfe, and will that his name bee called on throughout all the worlde. For the blood which our Lorde Iesus Christ hath shedde, hath sanctified all the world, which was then as it were in all filth and pollution. For we knowe there was no lande but this which GOD had reserued vnto himselfe, and wherein hee woulde beare rule vntil the comming of his Sonne. But when our Lorde Iesus Christ appeared, hee then obtained possession of the whole worlde, and his kingdome was extended from one ende vnto an other, and especially nowe, when the Gospell hath beene published. Sithence then it is so, let vs diligently note, that wee are at this day much more streightly bounde vnto the seruice and worship of GOD, for as much as by the precious blood of his Sonne, hee hath consecrated and made holie the whole earth, to the ende wee may dwell and be lodged therein, and that we may liue vnder his kingdome. And therefore as we wil that he haue vs vnder his safegard and protection, so let vs beware that wee yeelde vp our selues wholie vnto him. But because men are alwayes so fickle and wauering, that (as I haue already saide) no bridles are sufficient to rayne them to obedience, Moyses confirmeth all the doctrine hee hath in this place pronounced, by saying: Heare therefore, O Israel, the Lorde thy GOD is one GOD. He had saide before, Hearken: hee had saide, Take yee heede: he had saide, That they must obserue the lawe. But here he confirmeth his whole matter much more better, when he saieth so expressely, That the GOD of Israel [illegible] GOD. For by

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this, his meaning is to exclude all the Gods which the worlde forgeth, and he will shewe that it is not lawfull for them to conceiue anie thing after their owne fansie, but that only which we hold by the worde of God. Therfore when the God of Israel is called One God, it is as muche as if Moses did make comparison betweene the God which published his lawe, as before he was manifested vnto his seruant Abraham, and to the other Patriarches, & would oppose him against all the gods which the world imagined. As God in all times hath bene called vpon, this name hath bene common among the Paynims. But what? The Paynims haue so wandered, that albeit euerie one hath saide, I adore and worship God: yet what was this but their owne dreames and fantasies? For when men take vpon them to worshippe God, when they haue no knowledge of him, there is no doubt, but they worshippe idols. The Turkes at this day will say that they worship God, Creator of the heauens and of the earth: but this is but an idol which they worship. And how so? They name him Creator of the heauens and of the earth, they haue no images. It is true. But yet haue they but an idol in stead of God, because they will not receiue our Lorde Jesus Christ who is the liuelie image of God his Father. And we knowe what Saint John saieth, that he which denieth the Sonne, he denieth the Father. Therfore they haue not God, but an idol. As much is to be saide of the Iewes. The Iewes will brag much that they haue the lawe, and that they worship the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob: but what? They are Apostataes, they haue renounced the lawe of God, when they haue reiected and refused Jesus Christ, who is the soule of the lawe. It is he by whom God the father will manifest and open himselfe vnto vs: it is he in whom hee will be worshipped. And againe he saieth, Kisse the Sonne whom I haue sent you. And againe: Who so honoureth not the Sonne, the same honoureth not the Father which hath sent him. Let vs therefore diligently note, that Moses would in this place make comparison betweene the GOD which hath declared him selfe in his worde, and all the Gods which are renowmed throughout the whole worlde, shewing that all that is beside him, is nothing but emptinesse, and mere vanitie, and lying. And why? For [illegible] worship God aright, except we first knowe [illegible] to this purpose remember that [illegible] the woman of Samaria:

Hob. 1. 3. 1. Iohn. 2. 23.

Psal. 2. 12 Iohn. 5. 23

Ioh.4.22. ye know not what ye worship. When Iesus Christ vseth this word, he doth as it were spit at all those seruices and worshippings which were then established. There was no nation which vaunted not of seruing God: and Iesus Christ reiecteth all that which men thought to be good and holie. Ye knowe not (saith he) what ye worship. Hée sheweth hereby, that it is requisite and nédefull there be made some manifest declaration of God: we must not walke here at all aduentures, but we must be assured what the God is whom we serue and worship. Now séeing God must be knowne of vs to be rightly serued and worshipped, let vs consider whence this knowledge shall come and arise. Shall it grow in our owne garden, as we say? Shall we obteine it by our owne labour and industrie? Shall it bée lawfull for euerie one to thinke what shall séeme good vnto him, to say: I haue knowne God? No, no: but GOD must declare and shewe him selfe, hée must approche and come néere vnto vs. And so the onely meane to knowe GOD aright is this, that wée bée taught and instructed in his worde. And loe why he saieth, The Lord thy GOD. For this people had receiued the lawe: and againe, the couenaunt had bene made with their fathers, GOD had separated this flocke from the rest of the whole worlde. It is not then without cause, that Moses here leadeth the people to the knowledge of God, to the end they estraunge and kéepe themselues from all the superstitions of the Painims, that they haue nothing common with the vnfaithful ones: but that they know, that wheras God hath manifested himselfe so familiarly vnto them, they haue a most certein and infallible trueth. Now if this hath bene saide of the time of the lawe, it agreeth much better vnto vs. For albeit God hath giuen a sufficient admonition vnto the Iewes, that they bée not mingled among the pollutions of the Painims in their idolatries: yet haue wée at this day a much more brighter clearenesse, since the appearing of our Lorde Iesus Christ, who is the liuelie image of GOD his Father, as wée haue saide. And wée may well agrée vnto that which is written in the first of Saint John, None hath séene GOD
Ioh.1.18. at anie time: but the Sonne, which hath alwayes bene in the bosome of the Father, hath reuealed him vnto vs. The auncient Fathers haue had a knowledge (as we haue said:) but this knowledge is accounted as none, in respect of that which we haue at this day by the Gospel. Since the Sunne of righteousnes shineth on vs, beholde God

sheweth

sheweth himselfe most familiar vnto vs. And loe why the Prophet Esay, when he entreateth of the redemption which was to be made in the person of the Sonne of God: Beholde him, behold him, this is our GOD, this is our Lorde saith hee. The Prophet crieth out, This is, this is our God. Hee is not contented to say in on worde, Beholde our GOD, but he speaketh as if the thing had beene present, and that GOD should then appeare. And how is this said? Was not God in the middest of his people? For hee saide, I will dwell in the middest of you. And againe, Beholde my rest: Sion is the place of my habitation. And againe, hee protesteth, that hee will neuer depart thence, that the people is his temple, that they are his royall Priesthode. Why then is it that the Prophete Esay saith, Behold him, behold him, saith our God: This is he, this is he, when our Lord Jesus should come into the worlde? This is, because God renealeth himselfe vnto vs in greater perfection. There remaineth therefore lesse excuse for vs, if wee at this day wander, and holde not our selues to the pure trueth, but that euerie one turne after his dreames, to say, It seemeth me so, beholde what I finde to bee good. Know we, that all this is nothing, and that we must returne to that certentie of trueth which hath been brought vnto vs by our Lorde Jesus Christe. But the worlde is so farre from knowing of this, that it seemeth all haue desired to despite and anger God, that they haue deuised howe to turne their backe vnto him, that they haue laboured to reiect and lay aside al subiection, that they might haue leaue to remaine in their enormities and vnruly demeanours, and that their wickednesse in the meane time might not bee perceiued. The Jewes are vnexcusable, as wée sée howe the Prophetes reproche them, that they haue wittingly abandoned and put away GOD, and that they cannot excuse them selues, as the wretched Painims, saying, That they haue hearde nothing: for God protesteth, that hee hath not spoken in vaine. But nowe at this day, when God speaketh vnto vs with full mouth, and that wée haue so perfect a renelation in his Gospell, is not this an ouer great wickednesse, that men yet wander and goe so astray? Were there euer more foolish and fonde superstions, or more outragious and enormous than those which are at this day to bée séene in Poperie? I graunt, the Jewes mingled them selues among the superstitions of the Painims, that they defiled themselues ouermuch with their filthes

Esay. 21. 9.

Exo. 29. 45. Psal. 132. 14.

and pollutions: but when all shall be well sifted and examined, wee shall finde that the Papistes haue surmounted and exceeded them herein by many degrees. For the worde of God at this day is as it were buried among them. When mention shall be made of faith, the articles shalbe drawne from out of the forge of men, the holy Scripture shalbe of no more force, than as if it were dead, and vtterly brought to ruine. Loe howe they behaue them selues heerein, and when question is of the seruice of GOD, they wander (as we haue alreadie said) after their owne inuentions, and loe, My meaning is good, will they say, and they thinke God will suffer him selfe to bee ruled as a little childe, and that hee will neuer come to examine all the doctrine of Poperie. Againe, if men speake of faith is there any talke of the free promises of God? No, but they attribute all to them selues. When they will speake of the office of Iesus Christe, they ouerthrowe the vertue of his death and passion, as muche as in them lyeth. When any question is to be handeled of their saluation, then will they come in with their free will, with their merites, & satisfactions. But we ought contrariwise to returne to the meere and onely grace of the holy Ghost, confessing that we are in bondage and seruitude of sinne, but that we are thence deliuered by the mercy and goodnesse of God. And here hence cōmeth it, that the holy scripture calleth the remission and forgiuenesse of sinnes our righteousnesse. We must therefore come vnto this point, and also know, that if we haue failed in our dueties, wee cannot bring any other payment or satisfaction, than that which we borrowe of the death and passion of our Lorde Iesus Christ. Of all this there is nothing to be found in Poperie: If question bee of calling vppon God, they will make their vagaries vnto their he Saintes and shee Saintes: and Iesus Christ in the meane time shal not be knowen such a one as he is, nor clothed with the office which hath beene giuen him of God his Father. But the Papists degrade him as sacrilegious and false traiterous villaines, which seeke nothing els but to burie altogether, and to set forth to open prey all the glory and dignitie which God his father hath giuen him. As much may be said of all their seruice and religion. Wee see howe the Sacramentes are polluted and defiled among them. In place of the holy Supper of our Lorde Iesus Christ, there is substituted this infernall and diuelish abhomination, of the Masse, wherin they say, That Iesus Christ is sacrificed, as if he him-

Heb. 7. 24.

selfe

selfe had done nothing, as if he were not established the onely & perpetual priest by God his father. So then wee see howe the Papistes make a mockerie of the worde of God, wherein he hath reuealed himselfe, that it seemeth, that of set & deliberate purpose they would defase & put out the knowledge of him which is in the Gospel. And therefore we must more heedfully note this worde, That the Lord is God: yea, one God onlie. And so alwayes & as often as this worde of God shal come in place, let vs knowe that it is to cut off all that shall come into our braine, all that which men shall haue forged & deuised, and which we are not taught by the holy scripture: for God will be in such sort considered of vs, that we be not wrapped & entangled in the fantasies & errours of idolaters. And in very deede, wee cannot haue the true God, except we haue him alone, that is, that we ioyne with him no cõpanion: for assone as we come in with our little halfe Gods, wee renounce the liuing God. And why? For he will be alone, as he pronounceth by the Prophet Esaie in another place, I am the euerliuing, saith the Lord, I will not giue my glorie vnto another. And a- Esay. 42. 8
gain, we haue seene before that he nameth himselfe, A gealous God. And for what other cause, thã for this, to withdraw vs from all corruptions. As S. Paul speaketh in the 2. to the Corinth. For assoone as we are turned from the simplicitie of the worde of God, it is as if a woman should hearken vnto a Bawd which shal come to whisper in her eare. So we are forthwith corrupted & so we play the wicked fornicatrs against God, when we falsifie the faith which we haue promised him in baptisme: when we reiect & cast aside his law, we violate and prophane al religion, when we decline the least that may be from his pure & sincere doctrine. Let vs therefore beare in minde alwayes & as ofte as mention is made of this worde (God,) that we know that god must be alone: & therefore when we shal haue accompanied him with creatures, he calleth vs off as Apostates, & as people which are not worthy to haue to doe with him, because wee would not yelde vnto him the honour which hee deserueth: namelie, that he shoulde bee the Lorde, but shall haue prophaned his name by making it common vnto creatures, & communicating of it with our dreames. But withall, let vs note, that it is not ynough that we reserue vnto the liuing GOD the title of one worde, but we must take heede that whatsoeuer appertaineth vnto him, remaine and abide vnto him in his entire and perfect estate. As howe? He meaneth not only to be called

Gods.

God, but to bee acknowledged Almightie, to bee acknowledged our Father and Sauiour, to be knowen for him which hath authority to gouerne vs, for him in whom wee ought to repose our whole trust & confidence, for him whom we ought to inuocate and call vpon. Loe, the chiefe and principall things wee ought to thinke and meditate vpon, when question is of honouring one onelie God. I graunt the Papistes will stil say, That S. Michael, and S. William, and such others are not their gods: but yet for all this they worshippe them: yea, their images and pictures: although they thinke to escape by this shifte, that the images are not the Saintes they pray vnto, but onelie their remembrances to representhem, and yet is this against the expresse commaundement of God. And againe, they know not howe GOD will bee worshipped, when they so mingle him among their idols of wood and of stone, by the which they thinke to represent their Saints. It is true, they vse words themselues vnderstand not, of Dulia, and Latria, when they say they serue their moppets, that they beare reuerence vnto God. For loe, what they vnderstand by these woordes. But truelie God is much beholding vnto them, when they declare they honour him onelie, and that withal they serue their idols. Againe, to call vppon God, is it not an holie and sacred thing? For this is the true seruice which hee requireth, as it is said in the fiftie Psalme. So we see, that the world ouer impudentlie mocketh God, when men so wickedly corrupt and deprane his whole seruice and worshippe. And know we that this is a thing most detestable, when men so wander and leade themselues astray, after they haue had so cleare and so plaine a reuelation of God, and his will, as is contained in the gospell. And with so much the greater heedfulnesse must we rest and staie our selues on this doctrine, knowing that our Lorde will, that we hang and depende wholie on him, and that there be an inuiolable vnion betweene him and vs. And this shal then be, when we shalbe withheld simplie within the borders and limites of his woorde, when we shall yeelde no accesse vnto the inuentions of men, when we shall not leaue our minde to wander: but that after we shal haue heard what is contained in the holie Scripture, we shalbe prest and readie to say Amen thereto, not onely with our mouth, but that our fayth shalbee stayed and fastened on that which proceedeth from the mouth of God.

Psa. 50. 14 15. 23.

Nowe

Now let vs call our selues downe before the face of our god Christ with acknowledgement of our faults, praying him to make vs feele them better than wee haue done, and that more and more wee may know how farre and wherein wee are bound vnto him, and that we thinke not rashly to acquite our selues towardes him, but that wee tende altogether to him, and to his seruice, that wee haue no other studie nor desire, but to obserue his holie lawe. And seeing we are yet so farre from it, as any thing may bee, seeing wee falter so much and linger in the midde way, hauing the onely refuge to the remission of our sinnes, pray we that it will please him to receiue vs vnto mercy, and to beare with vs so farre, as to continue to conduct and to gouerne vs by his holy spirite, albeit we deserue to bee wholie reiected of him. And withal also pray wee, that it wil please him so to open our eyes, that beholding the brightnes of our Lord Iesus Christ, wee may be altogether rauished thereby, and constrained to renounce the things of this worlde, with the lustes, and affections of the flesh, which carrie vs headlong to all wickednesse: in such sorte, that wee haue none other desire, but to humble our selues vnder him, to the ende that being beaten downe in our selues, he may raise vs vp againe to himself, by his word, attending vntil it please him to change and transfigure vs into his owne image and likenesse, in the latter day. That it will please him to graunt this grace, not onely to vs, but vnto all people and Nations of the earth, &c.

Matth. 22.

35 One of them, a Doctour of the Lawe, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying:

36 Maister, which is the great commandement of the Lawe?

37 Iesus said to him, Thou shalt loue the Lorde thy God, with all thine heart, and with all thy soule, and with al thy minde.

38 This is the first and the great commandement.

39 And the second is like vnto this, Thou shalt loue thy neighbor as thy selfe.

40 On these two commandements hangeth the whole Lawe and the Prophetes.

God bee praysed.

FINIS.

Imprinted at London,

at the three Cranes in the Vinetree,

by Thomas Dawſon, for Iohn Hari-
ſon. Anno. 1581.